39 drums of toxic goods traced to Lepeng Wee

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BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2001 ★ 70 PAGES 6 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 70 ₱15

Prosecute Pineda, militants dare gov't

BY ANDREA TRINIDAD-ECHAVEZ AND ARMAND N. NOCUM

ONLY the prosecution of "jueteng" lord Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda, an alleged friend of President Macapagal-Arroyo, can prove that the Department of the Interior and Local Government is sincere in its drive against illegal gambling, the

PROSECUTE/ A7

5 banks turn over Estrada accounts

Ombudsman says 4 more banks to follow suit

BY MICHAEL LIM UBAC

NINE banks are following the lead of Equitable PCI Bank.

Ombudsman Aniano Desierto yesterday announced that five banks turned over to his office early this week the statements of accounts of ousted President Joseph Estrada and two of his mistresses—former movie starlets Guia Gomez and Laarni Enriquez.

Desierto said the International Exchange Bank, Metrobank, Security Bank and Trust Co., Asia United Bank and United Coconut Planters Bank submitted the documents upon his request.

He added that Rizal Commercial Banking Corp., Allied Bank, Bank of Commerce and Urban Bank promised to turn over the bank records of Estrada and his mistresses as soon as possible.

Desierto said he also requested the banks to surrender the statements of accounts of Estrada's other mistresses, including Joy Melendrez, Peachy Osorio and Rowena Lopez.

The Ombudsman subpoenaed the documents after private prosecutors and 82 nongovernment organizations sought the forfeiture of P20 billion worth of bank assets and mansions allegedly belonging to Estrada.

Half of the P20 billion allegedly represented money stashed in secret bank accounts and the rest was prime real estate.

During the impeachment trial, Equitable PCI Bank turned over to the Senate court documents pertaining to an alleged P3.2-billion se-

5 BANKS/ A18

JUSTICE Secretary Perez: Estrada surrendered the presidency when he left the Palace on Jan. 20.

Davide, Panganiban inhibit selves

BY ROCKY NAZARENO AND DONNA S. CUETO

CHIEF Justice Hilario Davide Jr. and Associate Justice Artemio Panganiban yesterday inhibited themselves from the oral arguments, deliberations and voting on Joseph Estrada's challenge to the legality of President Macapagal-Arroyo's assumption of office.

Estrada's lawyer, former Sen. Rene Saguisag, asked the two men on Wednesday to inhibit themselves, saying they might have "prejudged the case" as they had both stated publicly that Ms Macapagal took power legally.

Davide said that while he did not agree with Saguisag's argument, he was inhibiting himself from the proceedings "without prejudice to writing an extended explanation (on the outcome of the case)."

In a five-page letter to the Supreme Court

DAVIDE/ A19

SAGUISAG, Estrada's lawyer: He was driven from Malacañang by an angry mob threatening him.

Round 1: Erap gets 7-day reprieve; Ombudsman agrees to stop probe

'We are seeking legal, historical, political vindication'

BY ROCKY NAZARENO

THE EMBATTLED Joseph Estrada has gained a reprieve, with Ombudsman Aniano Desierto agreeing to temporarily stop action on the six criminal cases lodged against the ousted President.

Desierto will stop action on the Estrada cases for seven days pending the resolution of the disgraced leader's challenge to the legitimacy of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's presidency, as well as his insistence that he was still covered by presidential immunity against criminal charges.

"When the justices of the Supreme Court invoke courtesy, I consider that a mandate," Desierto said at yesterday's four-hour hearing wherein the tribunal en banc heard oral arguments on Estrada's suits.

The hearing was presided over by Justice Josue Bellosillo, Chief Justice Hilario Davide and Associate Justice Artemio Panganiban having inhibited themselves. *(See related story)*

Former Sen. Rene Saguisag and law dean Pacifico Agabin argued on Estrada's behalf, saying Ms Macapagal was President only in an acting capacity.

They also asked that the Ombudsman's investigation be stopped in view of the supposedly biased publicity against Estrada. .

"We are not seeking merely immunity," said Saguisag. "We are seeking legal, historical, political vindication."

Justice Secretary Hernando Perez and Desierto argued that Estrada surrendered the presidency when he left Malacañang on Jan. 20.

Perez said Ms Macapagal's installation as President averted a coup that would have established a junta with Estrada as "figurehead."

SC/ A19

Arellano, Pascual, Ocier new witnesses

HE REFUSED to name them. Justice Secretary Hernando Perez would only say Monday that there were three new witnesses who would corroborate the testimony of Mark Jimenez that ousted President Joseph Ejercito Estrada had accumulated P36 billion in ill-gotten wealth.

Perez only identified them as a "businessman and two ex-government officials."

The INQUIRER has learned that the former officials are Carlos Arellano and Federico Pascual. The businessman is William N. Go Ocier.

Perez said that the then unnamed witnesses would testify on the authenticity of the checks and other documents in connection with plunder, graft and bribery charges against deposed President Joseph Estrada to be filed by the Office of the Ombudsman with the Sandiganbayan.

Perez said Jimenez had agreed to turn over copies of checks that were allegedly deposited in various Estrada accounts.

Arellano, Pascual and Ocier are eminently qualified to corroborate

ARELLANO/ A7

Pro-Erap supporters rally at SC

BY JEROME ANING, JULIET L. JAVELLANA AND ANDREA T. ECHAVEZ

HUNDREDS of supporters of deposed President Joseph Estrada trooped to the Supreme Court building in Manila yesterday to demand that the justices be fair in hearing the ousted leader's petition questioning the legitimacy of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's presidency.

A clash seemed imminent as around 1,000 Estrada loyalists belonging to the People's Movement Against Poverty and about 500 members of various militant groups exchanged taunts and threw crumpled paper at one another.

But some 200 policemen, including truncheon-bearing riot police, separated the two sides and closed off Padre Faura Street in Ermita.

PRO-ERAP/ A18

THE DISPOSITION
Y ESCOPA

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DOING AN ERAP?

Which thought may have occurred to President Macapagal, House Speaker Sonny Belmonte and Housing Secretary Mike Defensor; hence, the laughter during her visit on Thursday to Barangay Escopa, Quezon City, where the President gives out land titles to squatters.

Apostol, Cunanan to PNOC

BY DONNA S. CUETO, ARMAND N. NOCUM AND GERALD G. LACUARTA

LEYTE REP. Sergio Apostol did not make it to the 13-member senatorial slate of the administration's People Power Coalition but he was richly rewarded yesterday.

The House prosecutor in the impeachment trial of disgraced President Joseph Estrada was named chair of the state-owned Philippine National Oil Co. (PNOC).

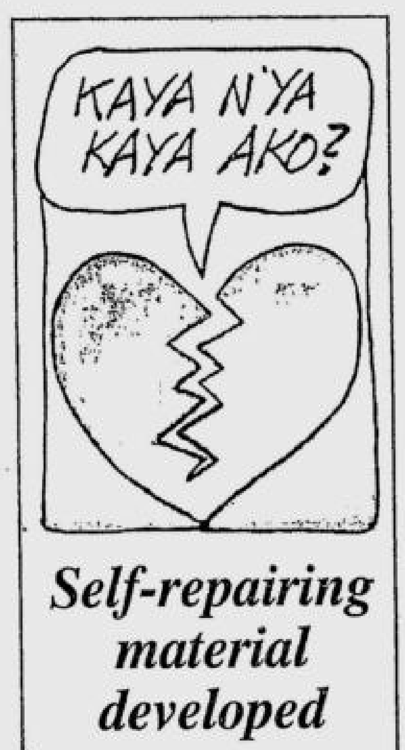
Joining him is retired Gen. Thelmo Cunanan who was named PNOC president and CEO.

They are expected to take their oath of office today in Malacañang.

Also expected to take his oath is Guillermo Carague, the budget secretary during the Aquino administration, who was named chair of the Commission on Audit (COA).

Supreme Court administrator Alfredo Benipayo was reported to have been named chair of the Com-

APOSTOL/ A6



Self-repairing material developed

BALTIMORE—Researchers have developed the first material that automatically repairs itself, offering a potential way of fixing the hairline cracks that develop in the space-age composites used in everything from tennis rackets to aircraft.

The scientists' secret: Tiny capsules of glue that are added to the composite material.

"It has just an enormous number of applications. That's probably one draw

SELF-REPAIRING/A19

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Toxic goods traced to Erap pal

By Cynthia D. Balana

A FORMER adviser of ousted President Joseph Estrada has been tagged as the importer of 39 drums of hazardous chemicals from Malaysia in June 2000.

A report by the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources identified Lepeng Wee, adviser on Mindanao Affairs to Estrada, as the person whose name appeared on bills of lading nos. 8970, 8908 and 10344 as both the shipper and consignee of the contraband cargo.

Acting Environment Secretary Joemari Gerochi ordered charges for violation of Republic Act 6969, the Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Wastes Control Act of 1990, filed against Wee and others named in the report.

Gerochi said the statements of account from the shipment's conveyor, Aleson Shipping Lines Inc., were addressed to Wee, hence he is considered the transporter and importer of the chemicals purportedly to be used in a foam company that has yet to be built.

The EMB report identified the others to be charged with Wee as Ang Ben Ean, Tan Ngee Foo and Nancy Lim.

Ang and Tan, both Malaysian nationals with offices in Sandakan and Mergong, Malaysia, were identified also as owners and importers of the chemicals, while Lim is connected with Panda Foam Zamboanga.

The 39 drums arrived in Zamboanga City on June 30 last year from Sandakan under bill of lading no. 10344 dated June 29, 2000 issued by Aleson Shipping to Wee.

Nineteen of the drums were seized on July 1 by anti-smuggling task force Aduana, the same day 20 drums were found at the 2C Lim Bros. warehouse in Tumaga, Zamboanga City. The drums had reportedly been received by Lim.

Zamboanga City Mayor Ma. Clara Lobregat questioned the entry of the shipment despite having been assured by the two Malaysian businessmen that they were merely chemicals to be used in the foam factory still to be built.

The EMB report said some drums did not have labels indicating their contents or countries of origin.

The labeled drums showed their contents to be methylene chloride, toluene diisocyanate, trichloroflouromethane, polymer polynol and spray adhesives, as well as chemical products like Forane II and Coronate 80, among others.

Methylene chloride is widely used in paint removers, degreasing agents and aerosol propellants as a blowing agent in flexible urethane foams, as a process solvent in the manufacture of pharmaceuticals and food products, to decaffeinate coffee and as a fumigant for grains and fruits.

Polymer polynol is used in the production of laminated slabstock foam.

Orinate 80 (toluene diisocynate) is used in the production of flexible polyurethane foam and other polyurethane applications, including elastomers, synthetic leather, coated fabrics, paints and adhesives.

Forane is used to maintain and often induce anesthesia.

Trichlorofluoromethane is used as a refrigerant, solvent, chemical intermediate and in making fire extinguishers.

RA 6969 makes it "unlawful to cause, air or facilitate, directly or indirectly, in the storage, importation, or bringing into Philippine territory, including its marine zones, even in transit, either by means of land, air or sea transportation or otherwise keeping in storage any amount of hazardous and nuclear waste in any part of the Philippines."

Abu Sayyaf grew despite drive—AFP

By Carlito Pablo

THE BANDIT group Abu Sayyaf has managed to grow despite relentless operations conducted by the Armed Forces of the Philippines since September last year.

Latest intelligence figures show that as of December, the Abu Sayyaf's strength increased to 1,269, representing an increase of 162 compared to the 1999 figure of 1,107.

"The figures are hardly alarming but we still view this with concern," Acting Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita conceded.

Ermita said the increase in membership could be attributed to the accumulated ransom for several foreign hostages it abducted from the Sipadan and Pandanan resorts in Sabah, Malaysia.

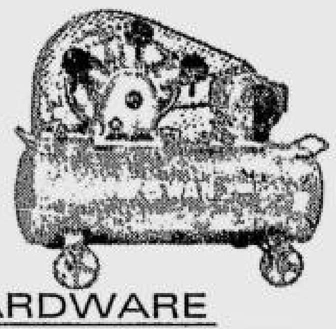
The AFP had estimated that the Abu Sayyaf got millions of dollars from these kidnapping operations.

Prominent Abu Sayyaf leaders like Galib Andang, alias Commander Robot, his associate Mujib Susukan; and overall leader Khadafi Janjalani and spokesperson Abu Sabaya remain scot-free despite continuing punitive military operations against them.

The Abu Sayyaf is considered a threat group in southern Mindanao, operating mostly in Sulu, Basilan and the Zamboanga Peninsula.

The same intelligence figures, however, show that the bandits' arsenal slightly decreased from 384 firearms in 1999 to 372 in December 2000.

Ermita stressed that while the Macapagal administration is bent on pursuing peace talks with communist and Muslim secessionist rebels, military operations will continue against the Abu Sayyaf, which is considers a criminal group.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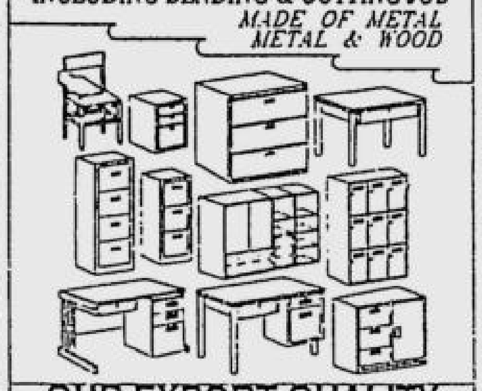
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BIRTH CONTROL,

Gloria toes Church line

By Norman Bordadora

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday virtually toed the line of the Catholic Church in her government's reproductive health policy when she said that her administration prefers to promote natural family planning methods advocated by Church leaders.

Speaking before the Asia Pacific Conference on Reproductive Health at the Philippine Trade Center, Ms Macapagal told delegates that her administration welcomes scientific breakthroughs in the field of reproductive health and population control.

Some 50 members of a women's group, Kababaihan ng Maynila, opposing the legalization of abortion in the country picketed in front of the PTTC building.

Carrying placards and clad in red T-shirts, the women staged a sit down rally assailing the organizers of the conference that they claimed is out to promote abortion.

"We are open to the adoption of new technologies being developed to improve the family planning, especially on the developments on natural family planning," Macapagal told the more than 50 foreign and local delegates at the Philippine Trade Center.

In her first days as President, she vowed that with lamb-like meekness she would follow the dictates of the Catholic Church, particularly Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin and the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines.

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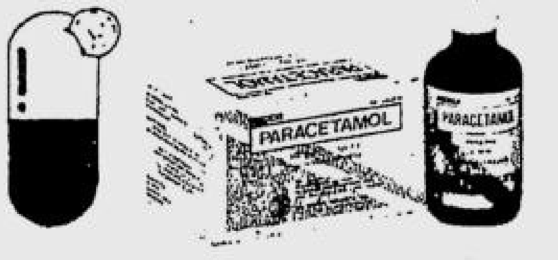

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Let's resume Erap's trial–Miriam

SEN. Miriam Santiago yesterday demanded anew the resumption of the aborted impeachment trial of deposed President Joseph Estrada, saying that the content of the controversial second envelope was a "Constitutionally compelling reason" for this.

In a statement, Santiago did not explain why she believed this was so, only stating that Wednesday's opening of the envelope saw an "appalling miscarriage of justice."

The INQUIRER tried but failed to reach the senator at presstime yesterday.

But Santiago was apparently referring to the fact that documents in the envelope did not prove that Mr. Estrada owned the P3.2 billion account in Equitable-PCIBank.

This was because the envelope yielded a letter from Chinese-Filipino Jaime Dichaves to the old Equitable Bank expressing his intention to open an account under the name of Jose Velarde.

But complainants in the impeachment case against Mr. Estrada suspected the letter was just inserted with the documents so this could be used in defending the case of the former president.

"Therefore there has been grave abuse of discretion amounting to lack or excess of jurisdiction on the part of Senate, when the majority voted to prematurely end the trial," Santiago said.

She also said the content of the envelope proved that "I have been punished for no crime except my conviction that due process of law should be consistently applied."

She was in reference to the public condemnation that came her way for being one of 11 senator-judges who voted against the opening of the envelope.

Buenaventura blamed for new Urban anomaly

BY MARTIN P. MARFIL

BANGKO Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura is incapable of cleaning up the banking system as he is stymied by his inaction during the time that the nation learned that former President Joseph Estrada was able to maintain secret accounts where money was laundered, Misamis Oriental Rep. Oscar Moreno said.

In addition, he said that the support of the Bankers Association of the Philippines and the Makati Business Club for Buenaventura was expected as bankers would be adversely affected by any cleanup.

"They are asking for the retention of Mr. Buenaventura because... they know that Buenaventura is already estopped from going through the cleansing process because he did not do anything during the time of former President Velarde," Moreno said. He was referring to Estrada, who had allegedly used the name Jose Velarde in maintaining bank accounts containing hundreds of millions of pesos.

"There is no reason for him now to do what he did not do prior to January because that would certainly send a signal that he was a 'Johnny-come-lately,'" he added.

Moreno also said that banks do not want to "rock the boat" saying that if a cleansing process was initiated, many of the banks would be affected for they have "violated many established norms on prudent banking process.

The remarks came during a press briefing where he and Makati Rep. Joker Arroyo revealed another anomalous Urban Bank transaction to exemplify how big depositors were again given preference over small depositors and how the BSP failed in its duty.

This time, the transaction involved a P562.5-million withdrawal by Land Bank of the Philippines that was done after Urban Bank declared a bank holiday on April 25, 2000.

Moreno said that the story started when the Urban Bank released more than P500 million in loan to the National Food Authority, a debt that was covered by promissory notes that were supposed to mature in December 2000.

At the same time, he said that Landbank had a P1.050 billion placement at the Urban Bank.

When the Urban Bank was ordered closed down on April 25, Landbank was able to get back some of its monies when Urban—on April 26—transferred P562.5 million in NFA promissory notes to Landbank.

The transaction, Moreno said, was the "largest undue preference" given by Urban Bank with the acquiescence of the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. and Buenaventura who was member of the PDIC board.

To emphasize the undue advantage given to big corporations, Moreno noted that aside from being a member of the PDIC board, Buenaventura was also a member of the NFA council.

The revelation came days after the two congressmen revealed that former President Joseph Estrada and the Bangko Sentral's Provident Fund were able to withdraw funds from Urban Bank a day before it was ordered closed down.

The withdrawals, the lawmakers said, typifies how small depositors were placed at a disadvantage by the Urban Bank's closure.

"This, together with the previous transactions... clearly suggests that Mr. Buenaventura's hands are not clean," Moreno said.

For his part, Arroyo said they would have preferred to let the matter pass as it was an unresolved item of the impeachment trial—the withdrawal of Estrada of P143 million from a numbered account—but added that the reaction of Buenaventura compelled them to point out that there may have been "fiduciary relationships" that have been breached.

He pointed out that the PDIC was the receiver of the Urban Bank.

"They received it in the afternoon of April 25, when the bank closed. Yet on April 26, when the bank was already closed, Land Bank was paid P562 million…This is another case where the small depositors were prejudiced but money was reserved for Landbank," he noted.

With 3 hats, Guingona is busiest gov't official

BY JULIET L. JAVELLANA

VICE President Teofisto Guingona Jr. will be the busiest official in the Macapagal administration, what with three jobs waiting for him.

Guingona has to juggle his time as a full-time Vice President, a hands-on secretary of foreign affairs as he envisions himself to be, and as active campaign manager of the 13 senatorial candidates of the administration's People Power Coalition.

Guingona moves today to the Office of the Vice President at the Philippine International Convention Center. He also visits the Department of Foreign Affairs for the first time today as its head.

Known for being hardworking, Guingona who is turning 73 in July said he would join as many sorties of the PPC as he could as overall campaign manager of PPC.

He said that while the campaign would be conducted six days a week except Sundays, the provincial sorties would be held on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

"I will have deputies who will do the yeoman's job because there are candidates for senators, congressmen, governors, and mayors down the line," Guingona said.

Guingona said he would be involved in planning the campaign.

As for being Vice President, he said would be very supportive of President Macapagal-Arroyo. He expects to join her in some of her foreign trips, saying the Executive Secretary would be around to oversee the government operations.

Guingona said he would still consult the foreign affairs officials with regards to the implementation of Ms Macapagal's foreign policy directives.

Guingona said he would hold office at the PICC, as previous Vice Presidents did, but would also be at the DFA often to attend to the pressing demands of the department.

Estrada's nemesis wants to implement a computerized network connecting all Filipinos working and living abroad to enable them to have the Philippine government's help at their fingertips.

Half of teachers' pay go to lenders—Roco

BY BLANCHE S. RIVERA

MORE than half of the P7 billion released by the government monthly for the salaries of public schools teachers go to deductions and loan payments, leaving the government faculty with very little take home pay.

This was revealed by Education Secretary Raul Roco, who said he would make it his priority to "correct this injustice" during his tenure at the perennially budget-short Department of Education, Culture and Sports.

The former senator said he would exert every effort to restructure the payment system governing loans of public school teachers and examine the legal basis for all the deductions in the teachers' meager pay.

"There's something wrong with saying that teachers have the noblest profession but they go home with only P2,700," Roco said, citing a random survey of 1,000 pay slips, which showed that most teachers get only P2,700 or P4,600 at best, of the P11,000 they receive every month.

"There are forced savings and all these other deductions; you cannot do that. We will examine very well the legal basis of these deductions," Roco said.

He said he was considering a system that would allow banks to assume the debts of teachers, who are paying as much as 35 percent interest for their loans, so they could then pay the banks at a lower interest.

The DECS could bid out the loans to banks that could give the "prime rates" for loan payments, ideally about half of the interest rate at which the so-called loan sharks charge.

Roco said paying one bank would make things easier for most teachers whose loans have piled up with various lending agencies.

"I would like to do it before the start of this schoolyear (in June)," Roco said, adding the restructuring was a top priority in his first 100 days at DECS.

Of the DECS' P93-billion budget this year, some P81 billion would be for the compensation of teaching and non-teaching personnel under the DECS. This would amount to P7 billion monthly, with at least P3.5 billion going to deductions and debt payments.

"Imagine if they used to pay 35 percent interest, and they would have to pay only 15 percent interest under a restructured loan system, that would be like giving them extra pay without a wage hike," Roco said.

Roco met with members of the Alliance of Concerned Teachers yesterday, a militant group that has been lobbying for a P3,000 across-the-board salary increase for public schools teachers and delivered the bad news.

"Because the budget has simply been reenacted, there will definitely be no wage increase this year," Roco had told a press briefing earlier. "It's going to be the same, that's why we're working hard on this restructured loan system."

Roco, however, agreed to the ACT's demand that he scrap DECS Order No. 73 which barred teachers and students from joining rallies. The order was issued by Roco's predecessor, Bro. Andrew Gonzalez, at the height of the anti-Estrada campaign late last year.

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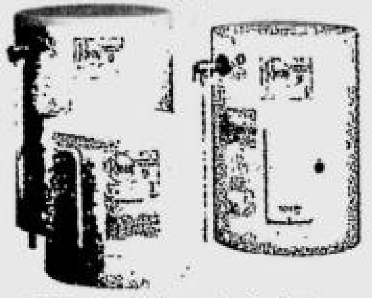

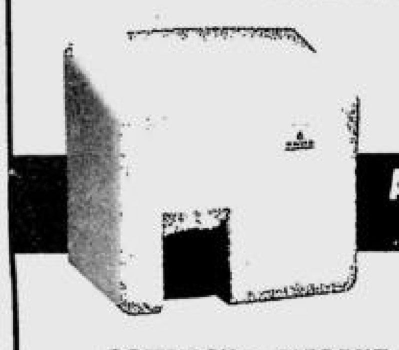

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Crime up after Erap ouster, says Mendoza

THE CRIME rate in the country went up after disgraced ex-president Joseph Estrada was ousted last month, national police chief Leandro Mendoza said yesterday.

Mendoza said that criminals had taken advantage of the transition period after Estrada was replaced by President Macapagal-Arroyo on Jan. 20 to carry out 11 kidnappings and three bank robberies.

Mendoza, who took the post of national police chief soon after Ms Macapagal was installed, did not give comparative figures.

The increase in crimes was "to be expected since we are still in a transition period. We expected 'that to happen and right now, we're doing everything to address the situation," he said.

Estrada had made crimefighting one of his priorities and previously boasted that he largely curbed the spate of bloody bank robberies and kidnappings for ransom that began in the early-1990s.

But allegations of massive corruption in his 30-month-old regime led to his impeachment and eventual ouster in a military-backed popular revolt last month.

He was replaced by Ms Macapagal, who named Mendoza as police chief replacing an Estrada protege.

Mendoza said that he had instructed police commanders to intensify crackdown on crime following a revamp in the police force.

Intelligence work would also be stepped up with police operatives told to coordinate closely with the military following reports that notorious kidnapping-for-ransom gangs operating in rural areas were coming to Manila.

Ms Macapagal's appointment of Mendoza to replace Estrada's hardline police chief, Panfilo Lacson, was earlier criticized by private, anticrime groups who had accused the new chief of coddling criminals. *AFP*

TROUBLE IN ANTI-CRIME FRONT

Smear job, Agarao says of raps

ANTI-CRIME crusader Carina Agarao yesterday accused acting Philippine National Police chief Deputy Director General Leandro Mendoza of being behind a smear campaign against her using her one-time colleagues.

At the same time, Agarao, president of the Crusade Against Violence, criticized those former colleagues—Juliet Cruz and Alice Vinculado—for "allowing themselves to be used to resurrect issues that had long been resolved."

Agarao said Cruz and Vinculado had presented themselves as CAV members when in fact they are members of the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption, a rival group.

Cruz and Vinculado had charged that P1.25 million in CAV funds remained unaccounted for. Agarao denied involvement in any financial anomaly at CAV, showing documents she said proved her innocence.

Agarao said the timing of the attacks against her and Teresita Ang-See, president of Citizen's Action Against Crime and Corruption, was highly suspicious, coming as they did after the two had opposed the appointment of Mendoza as PNP chief.

"Mendoza is really after our necks. He will do anything to malign us and destroy our credibility because he knows we have the goods on him," she told the INQUIRER.

In fact, Agarao said, Mendoza had tried several times through other people to stop her and Ang-See from pursuing their opposition to his appointment and from revealing his alleged involvement in certain anomalies.

AGARAO

MENDOZA

Agarao said she will come up with the proof in the next few days on Mendoza's reported involvement in anomalies that she did not reveal.

She also had been charging Mendoza with protecting the alleged mastermind of the killing of her husband five years ago.

Agarao said that while there have been disagreements between CAV and VACC, these "had never been made public until the recent courtesy call of (VACC president) Dante Jimenez and (vice president) Lauro Vizconde on General Mendoza."

She said it was then the smear campaign against her and Ang-See started.

Mendoza yesterday denied Agarao's claims.

"Mrs. Agarao must be assured that I had nothing to do with the charges being leveled against her. I never heard of them and no complaints have been filed with the police," Mendoza said.

He said though that if Agarao sought his assistance in an investigation, he was willing to help her.

Mendoza reiterated that he had been cleared by the Department of Interior and Local Government of the charge that he had coddled the suspected killers of Agarao's husband.

He said he was also cleared of kidnapping charges brought by Agarao against him.

"I just hope that Mrs. Agarao and her colleagues can settle their problems among themselves," Mendoza said.

For his part, VACC's Jimenez said his group had nothing to do with the "internal problems" at CAV.

"We don't know anything about the problems Agarao is facing," Jimenez told the INQUIRER yesterday over the phone.

Jimenez said Cruz was not a VACC member although she has filled an application to join the group.

He admitted, however, that Vinculado was with VACC although her appearance against Agarao was not in any official capacity as a member of the group.

VACC spinned off from CAV in 1998 because of management disagreements.

Jimenez also scored Agarao for saying he and General Mendoza hatched the plan to oust her from CAV when VACC officials paid a courtesy call on the new PNP chief two weeks ago.

"She doesn't know that VACC helped her cause after Lauro Vizconde and I brought up with General Mendoza the escape of her husband's killer from a Laguna jail," Jimenez told the INQUIRER. *With Christine Herrera and Jerome Aning*

LDP split; anti-Erap solons bolt

BY MARTIN P. MARFIL

THE OPPOSITION Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino has been split into two after members of its "conscience bloc" formally broke away from the party following its decision to support "pro-Estrada" candidates in the coming elections.

The "conscience bloc," according to Agusan del Norte Rep. Roan Libarios, counts about 20 members—of the 40 LDP members in the House—and their decision to leave the party would affect its political machinery.

"We split (off) when the LDP decided who to support for senator," Libarios said in a telephone interview.

The congressman, a member of the House panel that prosecuted the impeachment case against former President Joseph Estrada, said his LDP colleagues on the prosecution team like Ilocos Sur Rep. Salacnib Baterina and Pampanga Rep. Oscar Rodriguez also broke away from the party.

A leading member of their bloc, Nueva Vizcaya Rep. Carlos Padilla, has even decided to lead the administration's People Power Coalition in his province, Libarios said.

The breakup occurred shortly after the recent LDP convention where most of its members decided the party would support senatorial candidates closely identified with the deposed Estrada.

Libarios said their group also decided to go their own way because they were afraid the party might revoke its support for them if they supported candidates other than those on the LDP list.

The LDP "conscience bloc" had its beginnings last year when party members like Albay Rep. Krisel Lagman-Luistro decided to sign the impeachment complaint against Estrada for bribery, graft and corruption and violations of the Constitution.

At the time, Makati Rep. Agapito "Butz" Aquino and Edgardo Angara—the party's leaders—decided they would support Estrada who was the titular head of the Lapian ng Masang Pilipino, the coalition to which LDP belonged.

"We resigned from LAMP at the time, telling the party that we couldn't abide by their decision. That started the conscience bloc," Libarios said.

Gordon undaunted by Pimentel threat

TOURISM Secretary Richard Gordon is not worried about the threat of Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. to block his confirmation at the Commission on Appointments.

Gordon, former chair of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, said he expects to be given a tough time during the confirmation hearings to be held middle of this year but he is ready for it.

"I'm not worried. That's his privilege," said Gordon when he was asked about Pimentel's vow to block his confirmation at the CA in light of the graft cases pending against him at the Office of the Ombudsman.

Gordon said he was confident his "good record" at the SBMA would see him through the bicameral confirmation proceedings.

"I'm proud of my record. I'm proud of what we did at Subic. We made Subic a very important part of our economy," he said in an interview prior to his departure for Hong Kong Wednesday afternoon.

Gordon was going to Hong Kong to accompany former President Fidel Ramos who had been invited to address the annual Far Eastern Economic "Review 200" awards. *TJ Burgonio*

'Joker for senator' movement launched

THE JOKER for Senator Movement (JASM) was officially launched recently by JASM chair former Executive Secretary Catalino Macaraig and the guest of honor, People Power Coalition senatorial candidate Joker Arroyo, in a simple ceremony held at the its headquarters in Pasig City.

In his brief remarks, Arroyo thanked his supporters for their "spirit of volunteerism" and stated that it is in this spirit that he is moved toward bringing about "equality and justice for all Filipinos through good governance."

Arroyo said he believes that the nation, tired from the antics of traditional politicians, is looking for a new breed of leaders who will "heed the citizens' call for justice, equality and good governance."

Supporting Arroyo's call, Macaraig stressed that now is the time to elect members of the legislature that the Filipino people deserve and can respect,

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Apostol, Cunanan to PNOC

(From page A1)

mission on Elections, filling in the void left for 13 days by the early retirement of former chair Harriet Demetriou.

But Malacañang has not confirmed his appointment.

Lopa out of PNOC

Apostol will replace Antonio Lopa who was appointed by former President Estrada in June last year as PNOC chair.

Apostol was previously considered as solicitor general. But the post was given to lawyer Simeon Marcelo, a private prosecutor in the impeachment trial who did the direct examination of Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson.

Cunanan is known to Executive Secretary Renato de Villa, a retired general himself and a defense secretary during the Ramos administration.

Cunanan served as commander of the Southern Command of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, before he retired.

He was later named Philippine ambassador to Cambodia.

In announcing the appointment of Carague, Press Undersecretary Roberto Capco said Carague was named to the post due to his "well known integrity and competence as a professional."

Carague replaces Celso Gangan.

Capco declined to name the other contenders to the post, but said Carague's "dedication to public service" won the day for him.

"He was credited for helping clean up the Department of Budget and Management under the Aquino administration," Capco told the INQUIRER.

Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo headed the DBM after Corazon Aquino became the President. He left the post after a few months to run for senator in the 1987 elections under the administration ticket.

Carague, who then served as budget undersecretary, replaced Romulo.

Romulo lobbied for Carague

In a telephone interview, presidential spokesperson Renato Corona admitted that Romulo was one of those who lobbied for the appointment of Carague.

"The two of them have worked closely (during the Aquino administration)," Corona said.

Benipayo, 62, a former Court of Appeals associate justice, was a dark horse among the names being floated in recent weeks as possible replacements for Demetriou, whose term ended Feb. 2 due to a Supreme Court decision cutting short her tenure by a year.

It was former Rizal Rep. Emigdio Tanjuatco who was pushed as Demetriou's replacement by business and Church personalities and the National Movement for Free Elections led by former Trade Secretary Jose Concepcion Jr.

But it was learned that Benipayo, administrator of the Supreme Court since 1996, was Ms Macapagal's original choice for Comelec chair. He was offered the position days before Demetriou stepped down but he declined.

Benipayo finally accepted the offer yesterday. An aide of Demetriou said that the former Comelec chair was briefing Benipayo on Comelec matters at his Supreme Court office yesterday.

Malacañang has yet to make a formal announcement about Benipayo's appointment, but sources said he was set to take his oath of office at the Palace anytime today.

In light of these developments, Tanjuatco yesterday asked Namfrel and other organizations to withdraw his nomination to give Malacañang a free hand in choosing Demetriou's successor.

Tanjuatco concedes

Tanjuatco said he felt that the recommendations by key business, Church and political leaders for his appointment had resulted in "some form of tug-of-war."

"The stalemate should not obtain any day longer," Tanjuatco said. "Each day that passes is one day that a leaderless Comelec has to struggle in gearing up for a very important electoral exercise."

Tanjuatco said he had been hesitant in being nominated in the first place "as I was not looking for a job and chairing the Comelec was the farthest thing from my mind."

Tanjuatco, a relative of former President Corazon Aquino and a member of the ruling Lakas party, said "personal preferences must give way to the successful holding of elections."

Namfrel chair Concepcion said his group had been pushing for Tanjuatco because he "seems to be the man of the hour."

But he said Benipayo's track record as court administrator of the high tribunal made him equally deserving of the position.

"He (Benipayo) is a man of integrity and discipline. As the Supreme Court administrator, we saw him set up the offices of court administrators all over the country. He really is a system supervisor," Concepcion said.

The Namfrel chief said he learned of Benipayo's possible appointment as early as Tuesday. He added that same day, he met with Benipayo in his office at the SC to convince him to take the job.

"It took no less than President Arroyo to convince him (Benipayo) to take the position. When the President called him up that day (Tuesday), he could no longer refuse," Concepcion said.

Concepcion, quoting Benipayo, said the new Comelec chair would pursue the automation of counting of votes in the elections.

Benipayo has been associate professor at the University of Santo Tomas since 1963. He was also a bar reviewer at the UST and the University of the Philippines.

Before becoming Supreme Court administrator, Benipayo was a regional trial court judge in Manila from 1983 to 1987 and later an associate justice of the Court of Appeals for nine years.

He started serving the judiciary in 1974 as district judge and vice executive judge of the Court of First Instance in Malolos, Bulacan. In 1976, he became district judge of the Court of First Instance in Manila.

He graduated cum laude from the UST faculty of civil law in 1962 and was accepted to the Philippine Bar in 1963.

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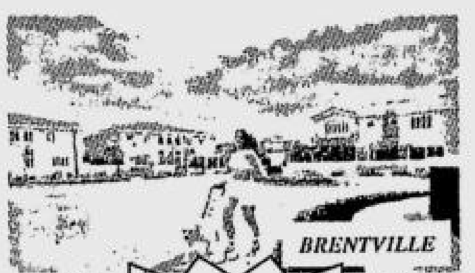

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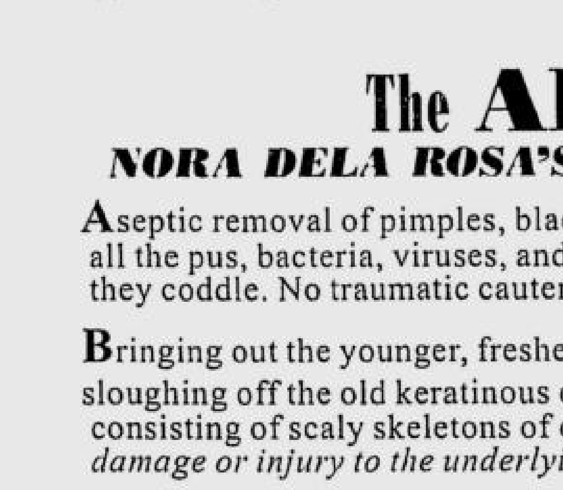

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Prosecute . . .

(From page A1)

militant group Sanlakas yesterday said.

"The burden of proof rests solely on (Interior) Secretary (Joey) Lina. He should litigate Bong Pineda, notwithstanding his alleged connections with Malacañang's new resident. If not, he cannot blame us if we judge his declaration as pure and simple electioneering," Sanlakas president Wilson Fortaleza said.

But presidential spokesperson Renato Corona said that Ms Macapagal "was never known to have any involvement in gambling."

"Since her days as Vice President, she has been against all forms of gambling, *masiao*, jueteng," said Corona as he called on the citizenry to lend a hand in the government's fight against illegal gambling.

On Feb. 14, Lina and the Philippine National Police (PNP) declared an all-out war against jueteng following reports of the resurgence of the illegal numbers game.

He expressed fears that jueteng operators identified with disgraced President Joseph Estrada would finance the campaign of certain senators and local candidates.

Jueteng operators had lain low as a result of the exposé of Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis 'Chavit" Singson in October that he collected P400 million in jueteng protection money for Estrada over a 21-month period.

Their operations were also disrupted by the short-lived Bingo 2-Ball, a legalized version of jueteng.

Lina admitted that Ms Macapagal was worried that jueteng money would be tapped for the May 14 elections.

The PNP reported that jueteng operations had been activated in 28 provinces in Luzon and 14 cities and municipalities in Metro Manila.

Senior Supt. Denis Nazaire, acting regional director of Region 3, disclosed at the PNP command conference on Tuesday that Pineda had revived his jueteng operations in Central Luzon.

Ms Macapagal yesterday said that there was a need to stamp out illegal gambling because it was one of the reasons the Philippine economy had not taken off.

In a speech at the Foundation for Economic Freedom meeting in Makati, the President said a citizenry whose idea of economic progress was "instant gratification" could never hope to attain sustainable growth.

"We cannot catch up with our neighbors by means of rent-seeking, or by the proliferation of a gambling economy," she said.

No gambling at Palace

"This may be a small thing, but under my watch, let me assure you that there will be absolutely no gambling in the Palace," Ms Macapagal said.

She was alluding to reports of gambling in the Palace and the presidential yacht, the "BRP Ang Pangulo," between Estrada and his buddies.

Fortaleza said that the people had grown "accustomed" to declarations of war against social evils during elections and that they were no longer taking these seriously.

"Even the deposed Estrada used this old trick by declaring war against poverty, but he soon discarded it like a used campaign paraphernalia when he assumed the presidency," Fortaleza said.

He predicted that Lina's drive against jueteng "will not prosper because it is myopically focused on Erap's cohorts and oblivious to underworld characters who may have shifted allegiance to the administration."

"It will fall victim to the politics of patronage," Fortaleza said.

Better chance

But the fight against jueteng has a better chance of succeeding this time because the President has the moral suasion needed to wage an effective fight against the illegal numbers game, according to Corona.

He noted that the people who ousted Estrada were also showing their opposition to the prevalence of illegal gambling.

"This is a good time as any to give support to the eradication of illegal gambling," he said.

He admitted that the problem of illegal gambling was so serious that it would take more than just police operations to fight it.

Corona said illegal gambling was no longer just a peace and order problem but a "social problem" as well.

He noted that in the provinces people view illegal gambling as a means for them to rise from poverty.

"People in the provinces even get angry every time it is announced that there is a crackdown (against illegal gambling), especially jueteng," he said in a radio interview.

He said "police efforts" alone would not work. These should be complemented by a concerted effort by the religious and nongovernment groups to remind people of the evils of illegal gambling.

Apart from this, he said Congress should review pertinent laws against illegal gambling and come up with measures to give the government more teeth in its anti-illegal gambling campaign.

Way to progress

In her speech, Ms Macapagal said the way to progress was the promotion of "sound macroeconomic policies."

"We should encourage, if we get to microfinancing, the growth of small and medium enterprises that will absorb unemployment in the most effective manner," she said.

She said "the final driver of economic growth can only be a strong entrepreneurial culture" which "has not developed in our society as quickly as it did in others."

Ms Macapagal said the entrepreneurial culture had remained weak because of the "history of rent seeking by our own elite," their unwillingness to take risk and their large appetite for protectionism.

"It is a long history that bred inefficiency, corruption and waste," she said.

"This feudal economic culture must be corrected by policies that encourage competition, innovation and inventiveness."

Arellano, Pascual, Ocier new witnesses

(From page A1)

ARELLANO

OCIER

PASCUAL

Jimenez's testimony.

Expected to testify on the SSS participation in the takeovers by Metro Pacific of the Philippine Long Distance Co. and by Equitable Bank of PCI Bank is Arellano who was the chair and president of the Social Security System (SSS) under the Estrada administration.

Estrada also named him director of San Miguel Corp. A prominent banker, Arellano was the executive vice president and general manager of the Far East Bank and Trust Co. group.

Arellano's testimony may be the unkindest cut of all for Estrada. The friendship of the two men dates back to their childhood days when the Ejercitos and Arellanos were longtime neighbors in San Juan.

Federico Pascual served as president and general manager of the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) during Estrada's tenure. He can corroborate Jimenez on the use of GSIS funds in the PLDT takeover and Equitable's takeover of PCIB.

Like the SSS, the GSIS was a key market player during Estrada's administration.

Formerly president of the Philippine National Bank, he also served as the chair of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Prior to his appointment to head the GSIS, Pascual was president of the Lucio Tan-controlled bank, Allied Bank.

The witness, who can back up Jimenez's testimony on the BW insider trading scandal and the ownership of Estrada's mansions in the Tagaytay Highlands, is Ocier.

Vice chair of Belle Corp. (his father Benito Tan Guat also known as Go Pok is the chair), Ocier was reportedly the young entrepreneur who originally discovered and envisioned the potentials of the vast expanse of land where Tagaytay Highlands is now located.

Belle is a publicly listed real estate company which focuses on the high-end leisure property market and on gaming and gaming-related activities.

The Ocier group is a major stockholder of the high-tech Vantage.

An Ateneo graduate and grandson of a wealthy grocer, Ocier made headlines news in 1999 when he led the coup that ousted Roberto Ongpin's group from the board of Belle.

With him at the Belle board of directors were well-known Estrada cronies Jaime Dichaves and Jacinto Ng.

Dichaves, who claimed to be the owner of the Jose Velarde account in Equitable PCI Bank, resigned from the board last November at the height of the "Juetengate" exposé. ***Researched by PDI Research***

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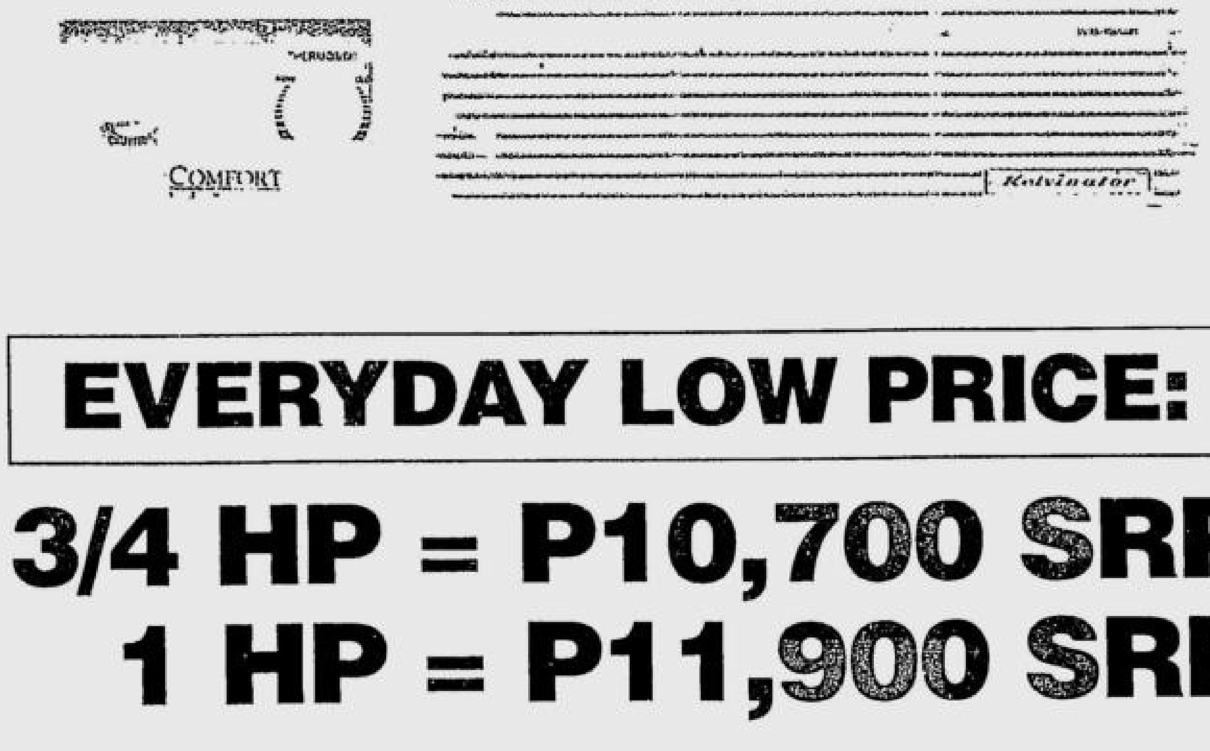

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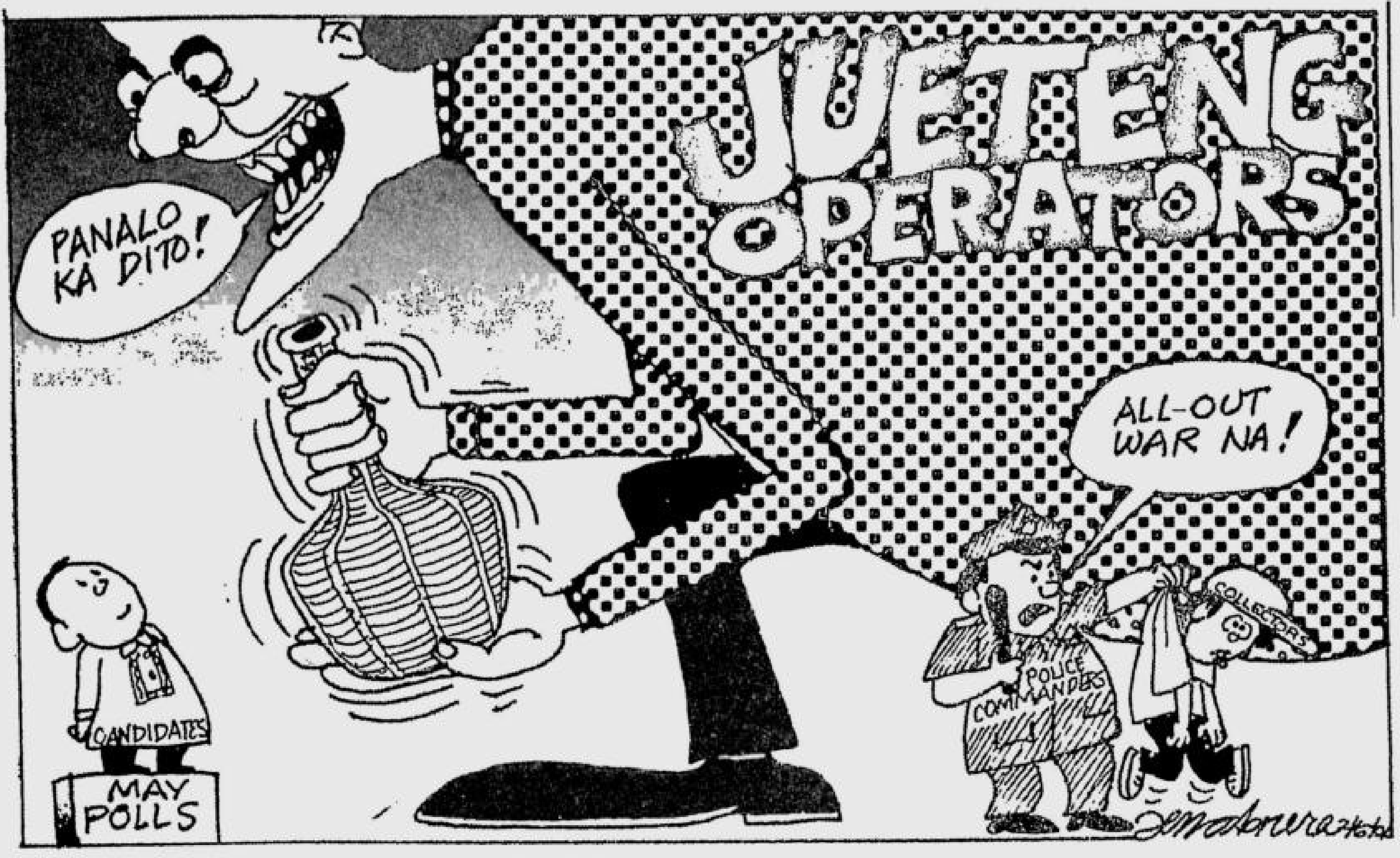

Who is Velarde?

EDITORIAL

THE ENVELOPE that sank the Estrada administration was finally opened Wednesday, and what it revealed merely confirmed what the public knew the day after the Senate voted to suppress the disclosure of its contents exactly a month ago. The envelope showed that "Jose Velarde" opened a bank account with the Equitable-PCI Bank branch on Juan Luna, Manila, on Aug. 26, 1999 with an initial deposit of P1. The next day P81 million in checks was deposited in the account, starting a series of transactions that saw a total of P3.2 billion being funneled into the account in a span of 15 months. On Nov. 13, 2000, the account was emptied. That very same day President Estrada was impeached by the House of Representatives.

Coincidence? Only if one can still believe Estrada and his lawyers and supporters. To this day, Estrada denies ownership of that account and other accounts in the name of Velarde. "This is not my account," Estrada protested Wednesday in an interview with the Cable News Network. "My conscience is clear and clean and I am willing to face all those charges."

In fact, the envelope also contained a letter from one of Estrada's closest cronies, Jaime Dichaves, requesting the opening of an account in the name of Velarde and directing that all transactions pertaining to the account be coursed through him. Dichaves also wrote the Senate during the impeachment trial to claim ownership of the Velarde accounts, but he fled the country as soon as Estrada was toppled from the presidency.

The existence of the Dichaves letter prompted Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, one of the 11 senators who voted against the opening of the envelope, to demand the reopening of the impeachment trial. "It has now become clear that there has been an appalling miscarriage of justice," said the senator who is now seeking reelection. One of Estrada's lawyers, Raymond Fortun, seized upon the occasion to call for repentance on the part of the hundreds of thousands of Filipinos who massed at Edsa and in many cities all over the country to demand Estrada's ouster. "Those who had gone to Edsa should now explore their conscience and determine for themselves if they had unfairly prejudged President Estrada," Fortun intoned.

Although Lent is but three weeks away, it is difficult to imagine anyone who was at Edsa wearing sack cloth and ashes in atonement for prejudging Estrada or doing him a gross injustice by driving him out of office. Even in the fantasy scenario, where Dichaves and Velarde are proven to be one and the same person, Estrada, Santiago and Fortun cannot blame the people who rushed to Edsa and other centers of protest. Sen. John Osmeña, one-half of the "Balato Twins" (the other is Sen. Teresita Aquino-Oreta), has said that the 11 senators voted against the opening of the envelope upon the request of Estrada's lead counsel, Estelito Mendoza. That vote ignited the popular outrage that became People Power II. If the Dichaves letter is incontrovertible proof of Estrada's innocence, it is his lawyers and his Senate allies who committed a terrible mistake and did him a great injustice by suppressing the disclosure of the contents of the envelope.

But is Velarde really Dichaves? It's the word of Estrada and Dichaves against those of some disinterested individuals. Clarissa Ocampo and Manuel Curato, senior officers of Equitable-PCI Bank, testified under oath that they saw Estrada sign the name of Jose Velarde on several bank documents right inside his office in Malacañang. Then there are the very revealing details concerning that particular bank account. Makati Rep. Joker Arroyo, who was one of the House prosecutors in the impeachment trial, has said that the checks deposited in the Velarde account had been issued by several businessmen including, Dante Tan, Lucio Co, Mark Jimenez, Manuel Pangilinan, a certain Kevin Garcia and Dichaves himself. All are known to be cronies of Estrada, and no one is known to have owed Dichaves huge sums of money. And finally one has to ask why Dichaves, if indeed he owned the Velarde account in the Juna Luna branch of Equitable-PCI Bank, had the sudden urge to withdraw all his money on the very day Estrada was impeached.

Estrada and his defenders need more than just repeated avowals of innocence to overcome the widespread belief that he had amassed a fortune through illegal means. If and when the Office of the Ombudsman gets around to filing cases against him, Estrada will no longer have an excuse to put off giving an explanation for the allegations leveled against him until he finds the "proper forum."

Mr. Datumanong, please spare those trees

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THAT short stretch of Quezón Avenue in Quezon City, between Edsa and the Quezon Memorial Circle, is one of the most beautiful and tranquil-looking places in the country. Stately mahogany trees line both sides of the avenue; palm trees stand tall on the center island. Looking east from Edsa, you see the tall Quezon monument and the park at the end of the straight avenue. To the left, near the circle, is the tree-covered Aquino Park and to the right are the spacious grounds of the Lung Center.

When the mahogany trees start shedding their leaves, it is like autumn in a temperate country; the brown leaves rain down from the branches and the wind blows the fallen leaves along the street. When the trees are bare, it looks like winter, and when the buds start to break out and the tiny tender shoots unfurl, it looks like spring. That whole stretch of road takes on a light green tint. And in summer, when the fruits pop and disgorge their contents, the seeds with their fluffy appendages whirl down to earth slowly like so many helicopters. Soon, however, many of those trees would be gone, massacred by the Department of Public Works and Highways.

Already, like condemned prisoners marked and lined up for execution, the trunks of the trees have white lines around them to mark where the chain-saw would bite into their flesh and end their lives. Reminds me of the Holocaust victims who had numbers tattooed on their arms before they were sent to the gas chambers. There are huge signs saying that "the cutting and balling of the trees have been approved by the Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources." It is the execution order posted for all to see.

You see, the DPWH is going to construct an interchange at the Edsa-Quezon Avenue corner. Because a flyover has already been preempted by the elevated Metro Rail line, tunnels will be dug on both sides of Quezon Avenue and the trees are in the way. Because the trees and the Metro Manila Development Authority cannot ease traffic here, the trees would be sacrificed. It took God many years to make the trees grow that big, but it would take man only minutes to mow them down.

Where are the environmental NGOs who were so noisy during the garbage summit? Why are they so quiet now? Isn't there a way to save those trees? Can't the tunnels be drilled deep enough so that the main roots of the trees are not disturbed? Can't the trees be transferred, without killing them, to the nearby, empty Commonwealth Avenue property of the University of the Philippines to make it a park for the taxpayers, who support the university, while it is not using it? Who is the new environment secretary who will rescind the permit to cut issued by the outgoing secretary?

The candidate for the position who is able to save those trees will deserve the job. If Rep. Heherson Alvarez can do it, he should be appointed to the DENR even if Senate President Aquilino Pimentel is against his appointment.

* * *

One more proof that the Traffic Management Bureau does not know what it is doing is what it has done to the Quezon Memorial Circle. Six avenues radiate from this Circle, in the middle of which is the park. This rotunda used to be a two-way thoroughfare for vehicles which made it necessary for vehicles to stop at all six intersections, thus delaying traffic flow. It took a long media campaign to make the Traffic Management Bureau see that it should be one-way, as all rotundas should be.

When it was finally made one-way, the center island was retained. It was necessary to cut out gaps through the center island to allow vehicles to go in and out of the inner lane. So far, so good. There was no need for traffic cops or for traffic signals in the intersections. All vehicles simply turned right upon entering the Circle and turned right again to exit. Traffic flowed smoothly.

But then an influential group sold traffic signals to the government on per-piece basis. The more signals sold, the more money for the group and more kickbacks for its sponsors.

So new traffic signals were installed in the six intersections of the Quezon Circle. They weren't necessary here; they were needed in many other streets without or with broken- down traffic signals—like the nearby intersection of Commonwealth Avenue and Tandang Sora where traffic is terrible. But priority was given to the Quezon Circle which does not need them. And to make sure that the signals were used, steel barriers were put across the gaps in the center island.

So now vehicles have to stop at all six intersections to wait for the green light. Even vehicles in the inner lane have to stop. Vehicles can't swerve in and out of the inner lane through the gaps because they are now fenced like a concentration camp. Result: Traffic that used to flow smoothly before now moves slowly and in fits and starts.

Will somebody who knows more about traffic management please take a look at the Quezon Circle before the widening of Commonwealth Avenue is finished? Because when Commonwealth becomes wide enough to accommodate more vehicles, the entry to the Circle would become a funnel and bottleneck where vehicles would converge in massive traffic jams.

* * *

CORRECTIONS: Superstar Nora Aunor and supersinger Imelda Papin will run for local government positions not in Albay (as stated in yesterday's column) but in Camarines Sur.

"Chuck" Mathay is not a councilor of Quezon City. It is his brother "Bu" Mathay who is.

When money runs and pigs fly

WINDMILLS

Jerry Barican

WHERE you stand depends upon where you sit. Take *jueteng*. A great moral issue, said the Church. A huge source of corruption, the then opposition told us, correctly. A national scandal, the media complained daily. But after Edsa II, the issue was permitted to die quietly. It is being revived again but only insofar as it refers to Joseph Estrada. So had *jueteng* stopped in the interim? Have the collections? Do pigs fly? Interior Secretary Joey Lina has belatedly discovered they do.

When politicians move into government from the opposition, and vice versa, attitudes change. What was formerly portrayed as upright obstructionism quickly converts into the downright variety when viewed from an executive office. Pigs do grow wings.

Edsa II has helped complicate this muddle. Many NGOs are openly part of the ruling coalition, putting into question the "N" in their acronym. "Quasi-" is often a more accurate term than "Non-". "Civil society" can be merely another name for campaign supporters and lobbyists. And so forth. Too many groups now wield power without accountability, being neither fully in nor out of government.

What hasn't changed is human nature. The campaign period that begins will have plenty of hoopla, self-serving rhetoric, cheap emotional gimmicks, little of which will be either relevant or new. Yet nowhere in the campaign will we hear proposals for the reform of an electoral system that has helped cause our present difficulties.

Money, as usual, is at the center of this story. You can't run without it. It probably requires at least P50 million for a realistic Senate run. But a campaign contributor can quickly turn into a crony, with all that that implies. Every candidate for office faces this reality. If the President wants to keep those promises she made in her fine inauguration speech of changing our political culture, campaign finance reform is the best place to start.

Our present laws on the matter are riddled with so many holes that a screen door seems solid by comparison. If you donate P1 billion to a political party or politician today, they are under no legal obligation whatsoever to report or account for it. Thus, "soft" money, not tied up to a campaign, is completely unregulated. "Hard" money, that given to an actual candidate, needs to be reported, but not until months after the end of the campaign. Donate in June this year for the presidential campaign in 2004 and legally no one needs to know about it until three and a half years from now. Don't run or don't spend the money and you can keep it. Furthermore, these reports are as accurate as BIR returns, except only that no one is ever audited.

The first change in the law therefore should be to require the immediate reporting as well as the regulation of any political contribution, whether made in connection with a campaign or not. Such donations, if not openly declared at the time of giving, should be considered graft and made subject to the laws against it. Strict regulations on the collection, management and use of these funds need to be created, in part because these can also be used for destabilization. Overthrowing governments is the people's right; it shouldn't become a habit.

The question of whether such donations of a public character are taxable also needs to be addressed. Several approaches are possible. Tax-free donations in relatively small amounts, say up to half a million pesos, in order to prevent undue influence or create big cronies, is one such. Or a progressive donor's tax can be imposed to discourage a disproportionate policy influenced by those who are richest. Or even no tax at all, provided there is full transparency.

There is a huge difference between why campaign contribution reporting works in say, the United States, and why it doesn't work here. Quite simply, the laws are stricter. If you were a candidate for senator here today, you'd hire an accountant. But you would only have to report contributions and expenses much later. And these reports could be vastly understated, with little or no risk.

We should follow the American practice. All donations, whether in cash or kind, and expenses should be currently reported, on a weekly basis. The Commission on Elections should have a reporting division to cross-check the statements and ferret out fraud. Each report should be detailed.

Establishments that sell to or service campaigns like printers, car or airplane rentals, hotels, sticker or streamer manufacturers, should be required to directly report these expenses to the Comelec. The Comelec should cross-check these expenses with the BIR: if they exceed what the candidate has reported or if he fails to give accurate reports, he should be disqualified automatically. Excess funds should be returned, donated to charity, or taxed as personal income.

Harsh, but effective. The truth, however, is that no one, least of all administration candidates, has any real interest in campaign finance reform. Even the form for reporting statements of assets and liabilities is more hoopla than reality. No detail is required. Neither is the basis for claims (acquisition cost or market value) stated. The SAL should be an audited and certified document if it is to be useful at all.

Until we focus on such practicalities, nothing much will change. Politicians who need money to run will go to businessmen, who need or one day will need favors from them. Investments need to be recouped, in one form or another. Elections breed corruption as well as democracy. Worse, able candidates without money have little or no chance for election at all. If you wonder why cronies exist, follow the money.

We are missing a historic opportunity to remove, or at least diminish, the role of money in politics. Cronyism will continue to rear its ugly head unless there is transparency and accountability in the election process. Favors are done to politicians during elections. In between is collection time, with interest. That cycle needs to be broken.

Don't expect the politicians to volunteer more hardship for themselves. Unless the media ask the tough questions now, they have little right to complain about cronies later. Perhaps "Too Little, Too Late" should be our national motto.

The myth of Erap's mandate

COMMENTARY

John Nery

THE PHRASE keeps coming back, like a cheap song's refrain.

Former President Joseph Estrada, it is said again and again, won "the largest political mandate in Philippine history." The phrasing is Asiaweek's (from an August 1999 article), but variations on the theme ("the biggest mandate ever given to a Filipino president," The New Statesman, January 2000) have been sounded since the May 1998 election, reaching a tinny crescendo in the last few weeks.

In its editorial of Jan. 23, 2001, the Washington Post described Estrada as "a constitutional executive who had received more votes than any previous presidential candidate." The assertion is an echo (or, rather, a reverse echo, narrower and more precise) of a December 2000 report in BusinessWorld, which described Estrada as having "garnered the most number of votes in electoral history."

In the flush of victory, those who wished Estrada ill when he was President may choose to concede both points: that the size of his mandate was the largest, and that his final vote tally was the highest, in our short history. Our lingua franca has a word for this suspect magnanimity; it's called *consuelo de bobo.*

But we've had enough of the B-word, haven't we?

In the run-up to the May 11, 1998 elections, a former governor of a Central Luzon province, who was the campaign manager for Estrada in his area, matter-of-factly assessed the chances of Speaker Jose de Venecia, the official administration candidate, and the party in power. "If all they can cheat us out of is 500,000 votes, they better forget it."

He was, of course, right. Estrada won with 10,956,610 votes; De Venecia came in a poor second, with 4,390,853 votes.

This is what the commentators really mean, when they talk about the size of Erap's election mandate. That he got more than twice the number of votes of his closest rival.

Leaving aside the dictator Ferdinand Marcos' dubious victory in the alleged election of 1981 (he "won" with 18,309,360 votes), only one other presidential candidate in history trounced his rival by a margin of 2:1 or more: former Defense Secretary Ramon Magsaysay. His victory in the Nov. 12, 1953 election, however, was different for two reasons: He won with an outright majority of 68.91 percent, and he had only one rival (incumbent President Elpidio Quirino, who won 31.09 percent of the vote).

In the 1998 election, however, nine other candidates aside from Estrada and De Venecia, ran for president. Thus, the true comparison of the 1998 vote is with the "plural" elections of 1949, 1957, 1965 and 1992.

On Nov. 8, 1949, President Elpidio Quirino, former President Jose Laurel, and Senate President Jose Avelino raced against each other in a three-man dash for the presidency. Quirino won with 50.93 percent of the vote. Laurel was second with 37.22 percent, and Avelino came third with a respectable 11.85 percent.

On Nov. 12, 1957, President Carlos P. Garcia found himself in a four-cornered fight for Malacañang (although there were actually three more candidates). He won 41.28 percent of the vote, pounding Speaker Jose Yulo (27.62 percent), Sen. Manuel Manahan (20.90 percent), and Sen. Claro M. Recto (8.55 percent) into submission. (This was the election where Recto poignantly boasted, *"Tapos na ang boksing,"* at the end of his campaign.)

On Nov. 9, 1965, then Senate President Marcos defeated reelectionist President (and former partymate) Diosdado Macapagal, 51.94 percent to 42.88 percent. Sen. Raul Manglapus ran a remote third, winning only 5.17 percent of the vote. (There were nine other candidates, including a certain Praxedes Floro, who got a grand total of one vote.)

On May 11, 1992, in the first presidential election after the Marcos era, seven almost evenly matched candidates vied for the presidency. Fidel Ramos (another former defense secretary) won with less than a quarter of all votes cast for president (23.58 percent). Former Agrarian Reform Secretary Miriam Defensor-Santiago came in second, with 19.72 percent; former Ambassador Eduardo Cojuangco Jr., at 18.17 percent, came in a close third.

Compared to these four "plural" elections, Estrada's share of the vote is impressive only when compared to Ramos' squeaker of a win. Quirino and Marcos managed to win not a mere plurality but an outright majority. And Garcia eked out a slightly bigger (but practically similar) plurality.

In 1998, Estrada's almost 11 million votes amounted to 39.59 percent of the vote, a substantial plurality, versus De Venecia's 15.86 percent. But calling his final tally historic is plain and simple shortsightedness.

The absolute number of votes one receives is partly a function of time—assuming, of course, a steady growth in population. Between the Philippine presidential election in 1992 and that in 1998, for example, there were five million more active voters—about as many as the total number who voted for Ramos in 1992.

The landslide victories of two reelectionist US presidents illustrate the point. In 1972, over 47 million Americans voted for Richard Nixon. In 1984, almost 54 and a half million Americans voted for Ronald Reagan. Reagan's share of the popular vote was 58.77 percent. Nixon's, based on a lower absolute number of votes, stood at 60.69 percent. The 12-year difference: There were more voters in Reagan's time.

As a gauge of comparative election mandates, therefore, share of votes cast is the proper measure. And on that score, the "largest political mandate" in the history of the Third Philippine Republic belonged to Magsaysay.

To be sure, any victory is mandate enough. "How many votes constitute a mandate for the winner?" asks political lexicographer William Safire. "He must receive at least one vote more than the loser." Thus: John F. Kennedy was supposed to have said, on the night he became president of the United States on the strength of a few thousand votes, "The margin is narrow, but the responsibility is clear."

Ramos' slice of the election pie was the thinnest in our history. But within his first 100 days he had wrapped the mantle of the presidency so firmly about him that, according to the findings of an Ateneo de Manila survey then, almost half of all voting-age Filipinos *remembered* having voted for him. A statistical impossibility, but a political reality: elections are only one way to generate a mandate.

By the same token, elections are not the only means by which you lose one.

John Nery is editor of a business magazine.

Miriam's big mouth

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IF you never studied at the University of the Philippines, or failed the UP entrance test, if you have never set foot on Harvard, Cambridge or Oxford, then Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago has just insulted you, and on national TV at that.

Interviewed on "I-Witness" by Vicky Morales, Miriam replied, when asked how she felt about the public reaction to her "no" vote that fateful night of Jan. 16: "Why should I be bothered by these Filipinos who are raising these protests against me? These same Filipinos who have not even stepped foot on Harvard or Oxford. I would be bothered if my professor in Cambridge were to take exception to my legal interpretation of a judicial matter. But to be bothered by a Filipino who may not even know that a Harvard exists, who can't even pass the UP entrance test, who wouldn't even understand discussions of such a high level even if they tried, why should I be bothered? I have no time to listen to this species of lower life forms."

While letting go of this mouthful, uttered in her trademark broad Ilonggo-American accented English, Miriam looked amused, sounded breezy, even. But I'm sure she was aware of the implications of this haughty dismissal of her critics.

Miriam may have had the "Edsa crowd" in mind when she derided them for daring to question her decision when they are so obviously inferior to her in terms of intellectual prowess. But surely she's aware that she may have alienated, as well, the *masa* from whom spring the 18 or so percent of the population that survey-takers say remains staunchly pro-Erap. After all, a UP education, or just a college education, much less a visit to Harvard or Oxford, is simply beyond their dreams. Are they all inferior life forms, then?

* * *

CORRESPONDENTS to the "Neveragain" e-mail group, to which I belong, expectedly reacted with vehemence to Ma(i)d Miriam's rantings. Begging their indulgence, I'm reprinting here some of the more entertaining ripostes to her put-down.

Jermi, always an entertaining writer, says: "Its official, she's running (soundtrack of Psycho, playing in my mind). I saw Miriam's application form in the Comelec. She's running for reelection. I almost had terrible nightmares last night because before I went to sleep, I had chanced upon Miriam being interviewed...

"My interpretation of Miriam Defensor-Santiago is this. Miriam is smart, I think the whole country knows that, in fact, probably one of the reasons that she wanted a post in the UN was to tell the whole world that...The key to her winning a Senate seat is to capture as much of what is left of the remnants of all those die-hard Erap *'masa.'* Now to do this, she has to act and sound more and more like Erap. She has to sound feisty, brave, courageous, she has to play the role of a *'bida'* to the hilt. Expect her to grow a moustache and to start wearing a wristband and to walk with a limp soon.

"But seriously, if you study the PR 'history' of Miriam, it is one of a 'public official' who is always *'palaban,' mataray sa mga kano* (during her stint as BID chief), eating death threats for breakfast, calling congressmen fungus face etc. These are all EXCELLENT publicity materials and paints a picture of a no-nonsense crusader...

"To understand Miriam is to understand that politics in the Philippines is nothing more than money, and getting and breaking even. Miriam's second campaign for the Senate will be anchored on carrying on the fight for Erap's *'masa.'* She will belittle People Power II (she has no choice) and will try to be on the side of the *masa.* Miriam will not go silently into the sunset, she will ride into the sunset with her arms flailing, her legs kicking and her mouth yacking away. But in the end, I do believe that she will ride into the sunset and she will end up being a horrid chapter in this country's colorful history."

* * *

"HOW does someone so obviously demented as a Miriam Santiago come to the conclusion that she is better than everyone else?! Is it our educational system that conditions each generation to mediocrity (as in: *'puede na yan!'*) which then encourages anyone with above-average intelligence to sell themselves as 'outstanding'?" asks Rica.

Ched, on the other hand, had this reaction: "Gosh, for the first time *sa buong buhay ko, gusto kong magmura! Ano naman ang tawag mo sa kagaya nya na ipinagpalit ang karangalan maipagtanggol lang ang isang totoong at* proven *na ganung klaseng* subhuman specie (Gosh, for the first time in my life, I wanted to curse! What do you call someone like her who traded in her honor to defend someone who has been proven to be a subhuman specie)?

"As you listen to those shamed (but still unrepentant) senators, you can't help but puke. Talking about subhuman life forms."

* * *

PEGGY writes: "(H)ow in heaven's name can she win the *masa's* vote, if she in fact sees herself as so high and mighty and will not 'be bothered by a Filipino who may not even know that a Harvard exists, who wouldn't even understand discussions of such a high level even if they tried' while continuing to maintain her usual 'chin-up-I'm-condescending-to-your-pathetic-level manner of speaking.' That's a contradiction in terms to the max. She will fail miserably. She will lose the election. Let's get hold of the tape of that interview and keep showing it to the so-called *'masa'* and show them how much she belittles them for they have not made *'tungtong sa* Oxford *o sa* Cambridge *o sa* Harvard' and that they are all really just 'species of a lower life form.

"This time her big mouth has done her in. The thought is delicious."

* * *

Comments are welcome at rinajd@hotmail.com

Museums should 'inspire new ways of seeing'

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

THIS Valentine's Day column should have appeared last Wednesday, but a funny thing happened while writing on the paintings of Juan Luna and Felix Resurreccion Hidalgo. I began on the way they painted their lovers, but ended up with an essay about the preconceived textbook-generated ideas we cough out when confronted by a canvas by Luna or Hidalgo. If you want to see Luna and Hidalgo anew, you must get out of the box, momentarily forget these painters are heroes and look at paintings that contain or depict their loved ones. These intimate paintings were not made to be sold, exhibited, or to garner prizes, thus opening our eyes to their art and their personal world.

Why get out of our comfortable aesthetic box? Why rewrite the way in which Luna and Hidalgo have been seen, interpreted and appreciated? A museum should generate rather than police new ideas. Museum exhibits are not there to recycle old knowledge, but inspire new ways of seeing. A museum is a place to gain new meanings. Reflecting on the National Museum and nearby Shoemart made me realize there are many common elements in both mall and museum: customlighting, arctic air-conditioning, long halls, display cases, souvenir shops, guards in barong tagalog, toilets and a canteen. While malls are bustling with people, museums are nearly dead. Perhaps the mall attracts more visitors than a museum because there is always something new to see or buy. In museums limited by rehashed textbook knowledge, one forced visit in childhood should last a lifetime. My work demands repeated visits to the National Museum yet I am surprised when I walk past a display I have seen dozens of times before and be struck by something I did not notice or think of earlier. While the prize-winning paintings of 1884: Luna's "Spoliarium" and Hidalgo's "Virgenes Cristianas Expuestas as Populacho" did inculcate pride in being a Filipino, we should not be limited to these historically important, but artistically boring paintings. If Luna and Hidalgo were alive they would probably tell us to look beyond their student work and discover their mature pictures.

Let us start with the most arresting Luna painting in the new wing of the National Museum. Till recently, this painting has been known as the portrait of Paz Pardo de Tavera. Though undated, it is believed to have been painted in Paris some time in 1890. During the 1988 First National Commemorative Exhibition of Luna and Hidalgo paintings, the Metropolitan Museum catalogue described it as follows:

"The artist's wife is shown seated and slightly reclined with her right breast exposed. She holds up garnet rosary beads as if in prayer. At the bottom right corner is a red-shaped table lamp, a prayer book and a blue flower. Behind her is a white drape. A greenish blue curtain is seen at her left."

While the above text is useful for a newspaper column that cannot carry illustrations, it does not tell us much. Expertly described is something you can see if you are in front of the painting. What is the context here? Do people even stop to wonder why Luna sends two strong but contradictory feelings to his viewer? A woman with an exposed breast looks out of a canvas, but there is neither life nor love nor lust in her eyes. Why? She holds a rosary in a gesture interpreted as prayer when she could, in fact, be defensive as one threatened by a vampire. Is she vamp or victim? None of our art books and guide notes dare to suggest more than our eyes can see. Available scholarly material rarely adds historical detail to a picture, depth to a story. They describe but do not illuminate.

My research on Luna has turned up a handful of photographs of his wife Paz Pardo de Tavera. If the saying is true, that a camera does not lie, then the woman in the National Museum painting is definitely not Paz. The real Ms Luna was a stocky woman, big-boned, heavy-limbed, with a squarish face. She was taller than Luna and despite Jose Rizal's kind descriptions of her beauty, in letters to his family, I fail to see what they see. The woman in this painting is indeed beautiful, as are two unlocated paintings where Paz is rendered better than she was in person. Idealized maybe, but concrete proof, I argue, that love is indeed blind. We do not need a computer scan to prove that the so-called "Portrait of Paz Pardo de Tavera" is not Paz, but someone else. Over the years legend has added to this painting's fame (or infamy). Hushed stories of it being cursed, or of fire seen in her eyes by some. Perhaps, we will never know who she is, but I know she is not Paz. Questions will keep us returning to the museum to contemplate this puzzle.

There are objects other than paintings in the two buildings of the National Museum—stone tools, the fossils of the pygmy elephant (*Elephas beyeri* after the pioneering prehistorian H. Otley Beyer), excavated Oriental ceramics that arrived on our shores before Magellan, weapons, costumes, naked granary gods from the Cordilleras, musical instruments, burial jars, even stuffed bugs, insects and an assortment of rocks. There is something here to satisfy every perversion, the only requirement is a visit, legs to walk, eyes to see and a mind to roam.

* * *

Comments are welcome at ambeth@admu.edu.ph

We narrowly escaped an economic disaster

OUTLOOK

Rigoberto Tiglao

IF you're still one of those thinking that Edsa II didn't matter at all, you should listen to Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura, who had been on the hot seat since October.

"It couldn't be sustained at all," Buenaventura told us in an interview. He was referring to the Bangko Sentral's attempts in the months before Estrada's fall on Jan. 20 to stem capital flight, and to contain the peso's free fall.

"There were people who were hedging at P60 to the dollar," he says. "And the rate might have really hit that if the crisis had not been resolved quickly," he said. "Even overseas workers were holding on to their dollars, and were remitting less than their usual amounts, which further put a lot of pressure on the peso," the Bangko Sentral chief said.

Buenaventura explained that the Bangko Sentral could only impose administrative measures to stop speculators from converting their pesos to dollars, such as one requiring voluminous documentation to purchase more than $10,000. "But in a month or two, " he says, "they would, as the market always does, find a way of going around the restrictions." "The political-premium was about P7 to P8," he says, "and that's a huge cost to the economy."

In the unlikely case you haven't noticed, the peso's value is now at P48 to the dollar, from the high P52 it hit during the first week of January.

It wasn't only the exchange rate that the Bangko Sentral was worried about. Equitable-PCI Bank was hit by massive withdrawals because of two factors.

Anti-Estrada groups called for a boycott of the bank, as it was perceived not only as a crony bank but as one refusing to provide evidence on the former president's secret accounts. These weren't just small depositors, but big corporate ones known to be stalwarts of the Makati Business Club. The second factor was the irrational panic among Chinese-Filipino depositors who thought that their accounts in the bank would no longer be kept secret.

"You could just imagine the impact on the financial system and the economy if the country's third or second largest bank, which is what the Equitable-PCI Bank now is, keeled over," says Monetary Board member Teodoro Montecillo. "The financial panic would have spread rapidly to hit the other, especially smaller banks," he noted. In comparison, it wasn't the biggest bank, but only the biggest thrift bank, Banco Filipino, which keeled over in 1984 and which further pushed the country to an economic crisis.

In short, because of Edsa II, we narrowly escaped an economic meltdown.

* * *

On another matter, Buenaventura says that if there was anybody who tipped Estrada to withdraw P143 million—if that particular account is really his—just before Urban Bank closed, it is likely the bank's chair, Arsenio Bartolome himself. The Bangko Sentral governor claimed that Bartolome personally had asked Estrada to bail out the bank by having the Social Security System infuse capital. Former Finance Secretary Jose Pardo though, strongly objected to the proposal, pointing out that such a move would reverse the government's privatization program. "We're trying to get out of the PNB, and Bartolome wants us to get into another bank," Pardo reportedly told Estrada.

* * *

Talk about newspaper bias. Malaya's headline yesterday: "2nd envelope confirms Dichaves' Velarde claim." The tiny Daily Tribune published by Ninez Cacho-Olivares: "Bank papers show no Erap link." (Huh? They haven't heard of Jose Velarde?)

And of course, Mark Jimenez's Manila Times: "David rapped for bias against Erap." One explanation for this banner: The Supreme Court with Hilario Davide as its Chief Justice last week issued a ruling paving the way for Jimenez's extradition to the United States.

Makes one wonder if newspaper size is proportional to editorial sanity.

The Philippine Star's headline, which I think was the most appropriate: "Velarde account emptied on day of impeachment: P1 billion amassed in 1 year." This paper's story on it was surprisingly billed only as story No. 3, with its headline a bit bland: "Envelope that toppled Estrada finally opened." It was amazingly similar to the Manila Bulletin's banner headline: "Senate opens second envelope."

* * *

Many people think that it is quixotic for former Asian Development Bank chief information officer Nandy Pacheco to devote his retirement to a crusade for a Gunless Society. A survey in December though by PulseAsia shows that 83 percent of adult Filipinos favor a more restrictive gun-ownership law. This is contained in a bill in Congress allowing only law enforcers and licensed private security guards—and only when they are in uniform and on duty—to carry firearms in public places. We certainly think it's a settled issue worldwide that a loose gun ownership law correlates with increased incidence of crime, especially murder. Pacheco rhetorically asks: "The people have spoken, but are the politicians listening?"

We don't think they will. Pacheco should commission somebody to take a survey of politicians, to find out who not only own guns but who are members of gun clubs. Membership in gun clubs is also a fad among senior media people.

* * *

We may have been wrong when we wrote Wednesday that it was likely that former Chief Justice Andres Narvasa wrote the Time article under the Joseph Estrada byline. A source claimed that it was actually Estrada's lawyer, Rene Saguisag, who wrote the piece. Remembering that it was Saguisag who has been giving extensive interviews with CNN, saying basically the same things in the Time article, we tend to believe our source. Saguisag has become weirder and weirder ever since his wife Dulce was appointed social welfare secretary by Estrada when now President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo broke away from the administration.

* * *

The text warriors are at it again, and have thought up of what could be a gem for the People Power Coalition candidates and a PR disaster for the Erap candidates. The text message: "Remember not to vote for PHLEGM—Puno, Honasan, Lacson, Enrile, Gringo, Miriam." A bit stretching it, with Honasan getting two letters there, but then the once-swashbuckling-coup-colonel-turned-Enrile-valet may deserve the emphasis.

* * *

Comments: rtiglao@inq7.net

THEY SAID

Recycling people

"What is terribly wrong in recycling good people?"

—President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo on the appointments of Renato de Villa, Mar Roxas and Emilia Boncodin

Initial jitters

"I do not hesitate to tell you that I am nervous because this is my first exposure to what is really partisan politics."

—Former National Economic Development Authority chief Solita Monsod

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Power to the people

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

FR. Sean Purcell, a priest based in Davao, has written a thoughtful letter. He is quite unhappy, he says, with my views about the Macapagal administration. "We are in a critical situation," he says. The groups that helped to oust Erap have different interpretations of Edsa II. They all have their agenda and are competing fiercely for government, creating "circles within circles."

"People freely threaten Gloria with Edsa III if she will not accept their agenda. People Power has become a Holy Cow, a sacred shibboleth. There is even the crazy suggestion that it be considered part of constitutional democracy.

"My concern about People Power is: who controls it? The French Revolution was clearly a case of People Power. Central to the whole operation was the guillotine, which was kept very busy slicing off people's heads. It is of course comforting to know that the cell phone replaced the guillotine in Edsa II. But can we be always sure this will happen?

"We have now a government full of contradictions. It represents a nation full of contradictions. In this situation, it is very necessary that the centers holds. The country is a smoldering bonfire at present—and I feel you are pouring gasoline on the embers. I feel that influential people like you should be presenting the country with a common vision. One that will establish national stability."

Well, first off, I do wonder why foreigners—Time's Anthony Spaeth suggested it first—keep thinking that People Power is a genie anyone can summon from the lamp at will. Or a mob or any demagogue can just stir up at the drop of a hat. Have you tried convincing Filipinos to do *anything*? It is the hardest thing to do. That is the reason I keep emphasizing the role of the activists, the NGOs and the POs in the ousting of Erap. They were there long before anybody else was—indeed when Ms Macapagal was just steering clear of harm's way and would not utter any rebuke of Erap though he was steering the nation into a gangster state.

So the disgruntled threaten to mount an Edsa III. So what? Everyone is free to entertain delusions. The miracle of Edsa II, as I've repeatedly said, is that it happened at all. That the most popular president of this country was toppled by an act of popular will. It was an unlikely event, and one that isn't bound to happen again—at least not without equally miraculous reasons.

I'm glad that you mentioned the French Revolution and the guillotine. If you had been here since the 1970s, you would have known that Ferdinand Marcos referred to it in his book, "Today's Revolution: Democracy" as a cautionary tale against overthrowing government violently. A "Jacobin Revolution," as he put it, produced nothing but a bloodbath, that revolution eventually devouring its children. It *is* a good cautionary tale, and I totally agree about its perils.

But that is not the danger we are facing today. There is no danger at all that we will produce political cannibalism with Edsa II. The danger today—as it was after 1986—is not that we will devour our errant children but that we will not punish our erring fathers. Or put less metaphorically, the danger today is not that we will commit political mayhem but that we will forget justice. That was what happened in 1986: Cory Aquino forgave the torturers and crooks, thereby paving the way for their return. Indeed, thereby paving the way for her own administration producing its own version of them.

That is what is bound to happen today, unless we protest it vigorously. The crooks and oppressors getting away in the name of forgiveness and reconciliation and healing wounds, and come back to haunt. It's enough to make you revise your opinion about the dangers of the guillotine. The wounds that need to be healed are the nation's, not theirs.

I agree: It is necessary that the center holds, it is necessary that stability prevails. But it is even more necessary that we assure that the kind of government we have represents the center and not the extreme right, and that the stability we produce is founded on libertarianism and egalitarianism and not on elitism and fascism. Those are crucial things.

I did say the other day that the thing to guard against are the twin forces that are unleashed at the end of major turning points and the beginning of transitions in this country. Those forces being the reconsolidation of the elite—the forgiveness of sins and life ever after: the process is not without religious resonances—and the pushing back or crushing of the revolutionary and reformist camps. That was what happened after the World War II, and that is what happened after the first Edsa. It created a stability founded on a new iniquity and oppression.

That stability is what assures turmoil and a smoldering bonfire—which has also gone by the name "social volcano" over the years. That stability was what restored the house of Marcos and made Erap possible. That stability is what makes People Power inevitable as an act of self-defense. If that is the kind of stability we'll have, I wouldn't mind pouring gasoline on the embers. Though I'd rather go for the metaphor of razing down a condemned building.

Or to borrow from economics, I'd prefer a dynamic equilibrium than an inert stasis.

I do have a vision for the country, one that promotes unity and a common purpose. And that is the vision of a strong people. You scoff at the thought of institutionalizing People Power or making it part of the Constitution. I do not. It may sound crazy to someone who thinks of it as nothing more than mob rule. It is not so crazy to someone who thinks of it as nothing less than direct democracy. I repeat: People Power is not something people can just summon at will, or manipulate at whim. Both People Power I and People Power II have been responsible and monumentally exemplary exercises of democratic rule. Both People Power I and People Power II have been uncanny and profound expressions of the democratic instinct.

I do think it is essential that we put the right people in government. And to that end I will continue to criticize Ms Macapagal to the extent that I think her choices push that government to the right rather than to the center. But I think it is even more essential that we keep the spirit of People Power alive to keep government on the right track. It has been the one thing in this country that has toppled a tyrannical government, it is the one thing in this country that will ensure democratic government. Elsewhere in the world, that is called a strong people.

Elsewhere in the world, that is called true democracy.

* * *

Comments are welcome at dequiros@vasia.com

LETTERS

Deprioritizing Muslim representation

THE EXCLUSION of former Sen. Santanina Rasul from the People Power Coalition ticket in the forthcoming election confirms the Muslims' fear of continued deprioritization by the national government of Muslim minorities especially in the senatorial election.

It is unfortunate that the administration depends on surveys rather than pursues a basic proposition for fair governance and democratic representation that there is an urgent need for principled, capable and adequate Muslim representation in the Philippine Senate. Muslim representation must be given high priority because Muslims have been systematically disenfranchised in national elective posts for a long time.

Being a Muslim and a minority, it is expected that the name of Rasul would appear at the tail end of the Social Weather Stations and Pulse Asia surveys. If, indeed, the Macapagal administration were consistent with its pro-Mindanao and pro-Muslim rhetoric, the finding of the surveys should have not been taken as the reason in dislodging Rasul from the People Power Coalition lineup. In fact, Rasul must all the more be supported by the government to make her win come May 14. Besides, she was one of the participants in People Power II, being an active member of the Kangkong Brigade.

While other parties have Muslim senatorial candidates, unlike Rasul, their "winnability" is uncertain. On the contrary, Rasul's track record in the legislature is beyond question. While the administration claims that Mindanao is now adequately represented by no less than the President herself, and Vice President Teofisto Guingona, and some appointees from Mindanao, it must be noted that these personalities are not Muslims (except political appointee, Public Works Secretary Simeon Datumanong). They, unlike Rasul, do not know the Muslims' pulse.—**JULKIPLI M. WADI, Institute of Islamic Studies, UP Diliman, Quezon City**

Abolishing MMDA is necessary

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is doing everything possible to solve the worsening garbage disposal and traffic problems in Metro Manila. But she cannot solve them unless the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) is completely abolished.

The MMDA has signed a contract to pay an Australian company $50 per ton to burn Metro Manila's garbage. No local government unit, not even Manila, can afford to pay $50 per ton. According to a financial expert, local government units can only pay $10 per ton. And it must use a waste to energy technology so our garbage can be used as fuel to produce energy and properly solve our garbage disposal problem.

There was no MMDA before the imposition of martial law. And there was no crisis in disposing our garbage. Likewise, our traffic problem was not as serious as it is today.

Metro Manila mayors should solve their own garbage and traffic problems and not delegate them to the MMDA. For really, what are they in office for?—**OSCAR R. LANDICHO, Sydney, Australia**

COA commissioners not political appointees

MAY we clarify that portion of Rina Jimenez-David's column (At Large, PDI, 2/8/01) on the issue of the appointment of a new chair of the Commission on Audit following the retirement of Chair Celso D. Gangan last Feb. 2.

It is not strange that COA officials and employees are asking the President to appoint a COA "insider." It is their right to do so. After all, the COA staff should know better their own officials who are aspiring for the COA chairmanship and the other insiders who are eyeing the post of commissioner.

David did not have the facts when she wrote that "none of the incumbent commissioners rose from the ranks, all of them being political appointees of Erap." The fact is that two COA commissioners and six assistant commissioners rose from the ranks. They are career officials who got their present posts on the basis of their educational qualifications, well-rounded training and experience, management expertise, professional excellence and loyalty to the commission and to the Constitution.

It is not true either that the COA insiders are all "political appointees of Erap." Commissioner Flores was appointed by President Ramos and he is not a political appointee. COA Assistant Commissioners Melchor M. Pentinio, Aristides Achacosb, Rey Villar, Sofronio Flores Jr., Emma Espina, Francisco Escarda and Jorge Perez are not even presidential appointees. Commissioner Dalman, although he was appointed by President Joseph Estrada, was no political appointee.

Appointees to constitutional offices such as the COA, the Supreme Court and the Commission on Elections, undergo very rigid screening processes capped by the confirmation of the bicameral Commission on Appointments.

Politics is hardly a factor in appointments to constitutional offices which are supposed to be apolitical and independent. To contend otherwise is to say that even Supreme Court justices and Comelec commissioners who have been appointed by President Estrada or any other president for that matter are political appointees.—**JUANITO P. RECIO, chief, Public Information Office, Commission on Audit, Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City**

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The WORLD

MARGOT J. BATERINA, Editor

BUS ATTACK FALLOUT

Israel seals off West Bank, Gaza

JERUSALEM—The West Bank and Gaza Strip were sealed off from each other and the rest of the world Thursday—Israel's response to an attack by a Palestinian bus driver who plowed into a crowded bus stop and killed eight people.

The driver, Khalil Abu Olbeh, 35, drove Palestinian workers to their jobs early Wednesday, then rammed his bus into a group of Israeli soldiers and civilians waiting for rides near Tel Aviv. Seven soldiers and a civilian were killed and 20 people injured.

Abu Olbeh led police on a chase down a main highway until he was shot and captured after crashing his bus into a truck.

Blaming Yasser Arafat and his Palestinian Authority for the attack, the Israeli Army chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Shaul Mofaz, announced a series of punitive and security measures—banning all Palestinians from entering Israel, closing border crossings between the West Bank and Jordan and between Gaza and Egypt, cutting off Palestinian travel from place to place inside the territories, closing the Palestinian airport in Gaza and imposing a sea blockade.

The Israelis also suspended VIP permits for Palestinian authority officials, which allow them to travel freely through Israel. Three Palestinian negotiators, trying to cross from Jordan into the West Bank, were held up for five hours by Israeli soldiers at the Allenby Bridge before being allowed to enter.

In Washington, US President George W. Bush condemned the bus attack and said mounting violence "needs to stop." After US Secretary of State Colin Powell, in a call to Arafat, denounced Israeli assassination of Palestinian militants, Bush said, "I'm urging all parties to do their utmost to end the violence."

After meeting UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, Powell appealed to both sides. "This is a time for restraint, a time for patience, a time for everybody to control their passions," he said.

Prime Minister-elect Ariel Sharon said the government's first priority must be to provide security for Israel's citizens. The man he trounced in last week's election, Ehud Barak, called for unity in standing up to terrorism and pledged that the perpetrators would be punished.

Unity was the goal as negotiators from Sharon's Likud party and Barak's Labor continued coalition negotiations. Sharon must set up a majority government before he can take power. He is aiming for a broad-based coalition with his Labor rivals as junior partners. "I believe a unity government will be set up," Barak said, adding that he is considering whether to serve as Sharon's defense minister.

Labor negotiator Haim Ramon said the two leaders would review progress in the talks, which were to continue Thursday. The two sides have agreed on the outlines of a peace program, aiming at another interim accord with the Palestinians, instead of a full peace treaty. *AP*

Japan gov't protests sub civilian helmsmen

TOKYO—Japan on Thursday made a formal protest to the United States following Washington's admission that civilian guests were at the controls of the US submarine, which rammed and sank a Japanese fishing vessel.

Japanese Foreign Minister Yohei Kono had a 20-minute telephone conversation with US Secretary of State Colin Powell, the foreign ministry said in a statement.

"I cannot help but say that it is an extremely serious matter if civilian participation in the surfacing maneuver led somehow to the accident," Kono told Powell.

"In any event, it is regrettable that the Japanese side was not informed swiftly that civilians were at the helm when the accident happened," the Japanese foreign minister said.

Kono called on Powell to clarify any link between the accident and the civilian involvement as quickly as possible.

"I hope you will follow up the case sincerely so that measures will be taken with full consideration of the Japanese people's feelings," Kono added.

Nine Japanese are still missing after the USS Greeneville came up under the much smaller Ehime Maru Friday last week, ripping open its hull and sinking the 53-meter trawler within minutes, some 16 km south of Hawaii's famed Waikiki Beach.

Washington has admitted civilians were given the controls of the USS Greeneville's bow planes and rudder during a maneuver called an emergency main ballast tank blow, which sends the submarine shooting to the surface.

In the telephone conversation, Powell apologized for the accident, but said the civilian involvement did not cause the tragedy.

"Secretary of State Powell said he would like to repeat an apology and regrets (expressed by President George W. Bush), and has taken the case seriously," the statement said.

"The secretary of state said he understands how Japanese people received the news that civilians were involved," it said.

But Powell said "he understands that the embarkation of civilians was not the cause of the accident, although he cannot clearly state the cause of the accident until the official investigation is completed," the statement said. *AFP*

'Kournikova virus' maker surrenders

LEEUWAARDEN, Netherlands—A 20-year-old Dutch man who admitted to launching the Anna Kournikova e-mail virus that wreaked havoc in millions of computers worldwide turned himself in to police on Wednesday.

"The young man came Wednesday to the Leeuwarden police station at 8:40 a.m. and confirmed he was the creator of the Kournikova virus," police said in a statement.

Police in the northern Dutch town did not disclose the suspect's name, but said he had decided to turn himself in when he realized the extent of the damage caused by the computer bug.

The man said he had downloaded an existing Internet file, reconfigured it to include the virus and reloaded it onto the Internet through a news service website at about 3 p.m. Sunday, according to police.

Police said they had taken a statement from him but that the man was subsequently released.

An investigating magistrate will now decide whether to charge the man, police spokesperson Harry Oenema said. *AFP*

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US may have to drop sanctions on Iran, Iraq, Libya, study says

WASHINGTON—The United States may have to abandon its trade sanctions against Iran, Iraq and Libya if it wants to avoid future international conflicts over oil, according to a congressionally sponsored report.

"If global oil demand estimated for 2020 is reasonably correct and is to be satisfied, Iran, Iraq, and Libya should by then be producing at their full potential if other supplies have not been developed," said the three-volume study prepared by the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Released Wednesday, the report, titled "The Geopolitics of Energy into the 21st Century," examines availability of oil in the next 20 years and attempts to forecast geopolitical implications of the world's growing demand for crude.

It said worldwide energy demand was likely to grow more than 50 percent between now and 2020.

But while in the industrialized world, it will increase by 23 percent, it will more than double in developing countries, with Asia accounting for the bulk of the increase, the study projected.

"At some point during the next 20 years, the developing world will begin to consume more energy than the developed world," it stated.

This shift in demand, according to the forecasters, will have far-reaching economic and geostrategic implications.

"Indeed, if estimates of future demand are reasonably correct, the Persian Gulf must expand oil production by almost 80 percent during 2000-2020, achievable perhaps if foreign investment is allowed to participate and if Iran and Iraq are free of sanctions," the authors of the study concluded.

An international oil embargo was imposed against Iraq in the wake of its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Baghdad has been subsequently allowed to sell limited amounts of oil abroad—but only to pay for imports of food and medicine.

Iran has been the target of unilateral US sanctions barring any sizeable US investments in the Iranian oil industry.

AFP

Prosecutors probing Clinton pardon move

NEW YORK—Federal prosecutors have opened an investigation into former President Bill Clinton's last-minute pardon of fugitive financier Marc Rich, a source familiar with the case said Wednesday.

US Attorney Mary Jo White in New York "is trying to determine if there was a transfer of money to buy the pardon," the source said, speaking on the condition of anonymity.

In a statement issued through a spokesperson Wednesday night, Clinton said: "As I have said repeatedly, I made the decision to pardon Marc Rich based on what I thought was the right thing to do.

"Any suggestion that improper factors, including fundraising for the (Democratic National Committee) or my library, had anything to do with the decision are absolutely false," he said. "I look forward to cooperating with any appropriate inquiry."

Rich's former wife, Denise Rich, has been a major contributor to the Democratic Party, the Senate campaign of Hillary Rodham Clinton and the Clinton Presidential Library Fund.

White is expected to examine bank and telephone records and other documents to determine whether there was a link between the contributions and Clinton's decision to grant the pardon, the source said.

A spokesperson for Denise Rich did not immediately return a call.

White, who was appointed to her post by Clinton in 1993, has said the pardon was granted without consultation with her office, which indicted Rich in 1983.

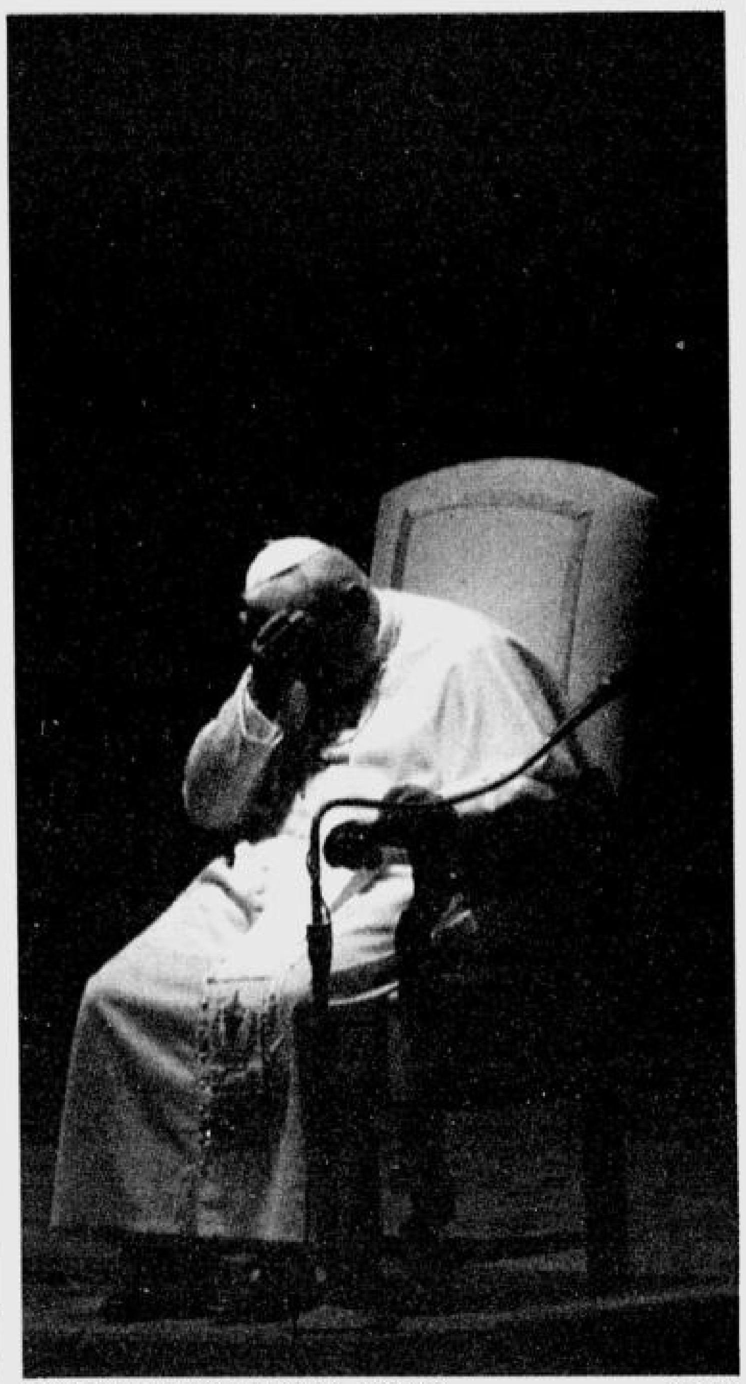
A spokesperson said White had no comment and a Justice Department spokesperson in Washington also declined to comment. Mrs. Clinton, through a spokesperson, referred questions to her husband's transition office.

The Constitution gives presidents the right to grant pardons. But Rich's pardon, one of 141 granted by Clinton on Jan. 20, his final day in office, has prompted sharp bipartisan criticism and hearings by House and Senate committees.

Before his pardon, Rich was wanted by the Justice Department on charges of evading more than $48 million in taxes, fraud and participating in illegal oil deals with Iran.

He was indicted on federal charges in 1983, shortly after he left the country for Switzerland. The indictment was filed when Rudolph Giuliani, now the Republican mayor of New York, was running the office.

AP



BONE TIRED BUT STILL GAME REUTERS

Pope John Paul rests during the Pontiff's weekly general audience at the Vatican Feb. 14. The 80-year-old Pope will elevate 45 new cardinals on Feb. 21 during a consistory ceremony in St. Peter's Square.

WORLDBRIEFS

Russians start pullout from Chechnya

MOSCOW—The Russian Army has begun to withdraw troops from the war-torn republic of Chechnya, in a phased scaledown in Moscow's military presence there, the defense ministry said Thursday. "The large-scale military phase is over and the operation to reduce troop levels has begun, in line with the withdrawal plan announced by President (Vladimir) Putin," a ministry spokesperson said. Up to 80,000 Russian troops are currently believed to be fighting in secessionist Chechnya, where Moscow launched what it called an "anti-terrorist" operation on Oct. 1, 1999. Deputy chief of staff, Gen. Valery Manilov, said that despite the reduction in troop levels Russian forces would continue to combat fully guerrilla activity but that Moscow wanted to return the republic to normal life. *AFP*

US-S. Korea summit slated for March 7

SEOUL—South Korean President Kim Dae-jung will travel to the United States in early March for a meeting with President George W. Bush, Kim's office announced Thursday. The March 7 meeting in Washington will be the leaders' first since the US president took office in January. Seoul officials said the discussion will focus on communist North Korea and "ways of strengthening traditional alliance." *AP*

Protagonists in Congo to meet again

LUSAKA, Zambia—Leaders of the countries fighting in Congo are meeting once again discuss ending the two-and-a-half year war. But this time, some involved in the long-stalled peace process began expressing cautious hope. Since Joseph Kabila became president of Congo last month following the assassination of his father, Laurent, the Congolese have expressed renewed willingness to discuss peace. At the United Nations earlier this month, Kabila publicly pledged his commitment to the 1999 Lusaka agreement, an often-violated ceasefire accord signed by all the warring parties. *AP*

Kidnappers in Ecuador accept ransom bid

QUITO, Ecuador—Kidnappers who last month left the bullet-ridden body of a Missouri oil worker in the jungle have agreed to a ransom offer just ahead of their deadline to murder another of seven foreign captives, Ecuador's top military chief said Wednesday. "With relation to the deadline of today or tomorrow to execute a second captive, I have information that yesterday, negotiations were restarted," said Vice Adm. Miguel Saona, head of Ecuador's military Joint Chiefs of Staff. "The criminal group said it would not execute anyone else and I understand they have reached some economic arrangement." Authorities believe the kidnappers are members of the same criminal gang that held seven Canadians and an American for ransom for 100 days in late 1999. Alberta-based United Pipeline Systems has never confirmed reports that it paid $3.5 million for the release of its employees. *AP*

Caribbean nations want death penalty

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados—Ten Caribbean countries that want to use the death penalty to quash rising crime have signed an agreement to scrap one of the last vestiges of colonialism here by replacing Britain's Privy Council with a regional supreme court. The Privy Council, made up of members of the House of Lords in London, "has served the region well over the years," Prime Minister Kenny Anthony of St. Lucia said Wednesday at the start of the three-day Caricom summit. But, "The cycle of independence which began in 1962 . . . cannot be considered to be complete until the determination of rights, duties, and interests of Caribbean litigants are pronounced on by a regional court." The deal severs a 170-year tie. Signatories to the agreement were Guyana, Barbados, Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Grenada, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, St. Lucia and St. Kitts and Nevis. Suriname also signed on to use the new Caribbean Court of Justice because it is a member of the Caribbean Community trade bloc, also known as Caricom, though it is a former Dutch colony that never used the Privy Council. *AP*

Nasa marks 100th spacewalk

WASHINGTON—Nasa marked its 100th spacewalk Wednesday as two astronauts from the US Space Shuttle Atlantis ventured out to finish assembling the International Space Station's Destiny space lab module. After the Atlantis team spent Tuesday resting, astronauts Thomas Jones and Bob Curbeam left the shuttle at 9:48 a.m. Wednesday to begin their nearly five-hour mission, said Kyle Herring, spokesperson for mission control in Houston, Texas. Struck by the enormity of the space station, as tall as a 17-story building, Jones described the view from his new vantage point to his colleagues back on the shuttle. "I see the moon up by the solar arrays there—just gorgeous," he said as he stepped out into space. During their spacewalk, Jones and Curbeam affixed a communications antenna to the ISS's Z1 module, installed a radiator panel on the solar arrays truss and connected electrical and data lines between one of the ISS docking ports and the $1.4-billion Destiny laboratory. *AFP*

Seoul snowstorm worst in 32 years

SEOUL—Heavy snowfall forced the cancellation of flights and closed many roads in central South Korea yesterday, where a snowstorm alert was announced, officials said. Most domestic flights were canceled and international flights out of Seoul's Kimpo Airport were much delayed because of de-icing, avionics authorities said. The snowstorm wreaked havoc with road traffic, forcing many commuter buses in Seoul and its surrounding province of Kyungki out of service. In central Seoul, snow-covered streets were largely devoid of traffic as pedestrians fought their way through the storm. Snow started falling early yesterday and by mid-afternoon Seoul had received 15 cm of snow, the highest recorded for a single day in 32 years. *AFP*

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Across the NATION

TONY BERGONIA, Assistant Editor

ROUNDUP

Dads rush pro-kids rules

DIGOS CITY—The city council here is rushing the passage of an ordinance that aims to boost efforts to protect children. Councilor Nonito Llanos III said the Children's Welfare Act must be passed before the campaign period starts or it may have to wait for the next council. Under the proposed measure, the city government would set aside at least 2 percent of its Internal Revenue Allotment for child protection programs, including the rehabilitation of prostituted minors.

Allan Nawal, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Cebu-Cotabato flights back

COTABATO CITY—The Philippine Airlines will resume its Cebu-Cotabato-Cebu domestic route due to persistent demand from the business community here. Andy Mandanas, PAL-Cotabato branch manager, said the twice-a-week flight will start on Feb. 22 with an introductory one-way fare of P1,478. PAL, which will use either an Airbus 330 or a Boeing 747 every Thursdays and Sundays, suspended its Cotabato-Cebu domestic flights in 1999 due to the crisis in the airline company.

Edwin Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Medical mission held

JOLO, Sulu—The Rotary Club of Manila and the AFP Reserved Command are jointly undertaking the week-long (Feb. 11-15) medical mission for indigent patients of Jolo, Sulu, said Col. Godofredo Rabara of the AFP Reserve Command. The 35-member mission group left for Jolo Sunday from the Edwin Andrews Air Base bringing P2 million worth of medicines. Rabara said similar missions will also be conducted in the depressed areas of Cotabato and Basilan.

Jonathan Ma, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Anti-drug seminars set

BULACAN DrugWatch trainors are preparing to conduct seminars on the dangers of drug abuse in the province as part of the DrugWatch campaign for party-list representation. Bulacan DrugWatch youth coordinator Ricci del Rosario said the provincial chapter has a core group of trainors who have been actively engaged in anti-drugs activities in their communities. These trainors shall take their oath before Bulacan Gov. Josefina de la Cruz tomorrow at the Hiyas Convention Center in Malolos. "We would like to combine drug prevention seminars with the DrugWatch campaign for party-list votes. This way we will be hitting two birds with one stone," Del Rosario said in a statement.

'Muro-ami' remains sea scourge; 35 flee

By CARLA GOMEZ
AND ROMY AMARADO
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—Thirty-five fishermen, 10 of them minors, from Negros Oriental escaped from their fishing vessel in Palawan on Feb. 9 because they could no longer endure the inhuman treatment they were getting.

The minors are now in the custody of Puerto Princesa officials, said Negros Occidental Gov. Rafael Coscolluela based on his conversation with Rod Saucelo, executive assistant of Puerto Princesa Mayor Edward Hagedorn.

The minors were identified as Edgar Blazarn, Ricky Iballe, Benny Cahente, Jerry Dinapo, Ricson Bilonta, Renante Caduli and Jomar Peronimo and Jaime, Joel and Danny, all surnamed Lastimoso.

Coscolluela said the minors were residents of Sta. Catalina and Bindoy towns in Negros Oriental.

The 25 others were still in Barangay Caruray of the island-town of San Vicente, at least six hours by boat from Puerto Princesa. Their needs were being taken care of by the Palawan provincial government.

The 35 were workers of FB Unity I owned by Unity Fishing Corp. based in Dauin town, Negros Oriental.

On Feb. 9, they were instructed to gather firewood on a nearby island. But they did not return and instead proceeded to Barangay Caruray to seek help.

Henry Ramos of radio station dyER in Puerto Princesa, who interviewed some of the fishermen, said in an interview over Radyo Bandiloy in Dumaguete City yesterday that the 35 decided to escape because they could no longer bear the inhuman treatment they were getting from their master and his men.

The victims could not identify the skipper of the vessel, Ramos said.

He said the fishermen were made to dive to the sea as early as 4 a.m. and would take their breakfast four hours later.

Sometimes, he added, the fishermen were beaten up or hit with a paddle by vessel officials even if they were sick.

The INQUIRER called up Eloy Audencia, operation officer of Unity Fishing yesterday. But the man who answered the phone said Audencia was in Santander, Cebu for some business transactions.

The man, who declined to give his name, denied that the company was into *muro-ami* fishing and the recruitment of minors. He also denied that their workers were being maltreated.

Negros Oriental Gov. George Arnais appealed to local officials in Puerto Princesa and Palawan to help the fishermen return home safely.

He said he already asked the labor department and other concerned agencies to look into the matter and study the possibility of filing a case against Unity Fishing Corp.

Coscolluela said he was given assurances by Palawan Gov. Joel Reyes that a vessel of the Western Naval Command would bring the fishermen to their families on Monday.

According to Coscolluela, Saucelo told him that the FB Unity I was engaged in *muro-ami*, an illegal method of fishing.

Saucelo told Coscolluela that there are at least three big fishing vessels that were involved in *muro-ami*. On the average, the vessel employs 384 minors with ages raging from 13 to 15 years old.

Saucelo does not know the vessels' names except the one mentioned by the minors who escaped.

Farmers oppose Bataan land conversion

SAMAL, Bataan—At least 500 farmers in this town have been taking turns barricading a 50-hectare land in Barangay Gugo here since Feb. 9 in a bid to stop the provincial government from developing a low-cost housing project in the disputed estate.

Tension rose on Tuesday when members of the Alyansa ng Magbubukid sa Bataan (Almaba), their arms linked to form a human barricade, stopped two earth-moving equipment from entering the site in the 300-hectare Coloso Estate.

Almaba wants the provincial government to stop the conversion plan and to honor the right of at least 100 families in the site to own and till the land in the estate.

Almaba spokesperson Roger Pastranas said these families have been tilling the area since 1969.

Former Agrarian Reform Secretary Ernesto Garilao placed the estate under the coverage of the agrarian reform program, Pastranas said.

The landowners contested Garilao's order at the Supreme Court, which has still to decide on the case, court records showed.

In 1997, the provincial government forfeited the property after the landowners failed to pay taxes in the last 20 years, Gov. Leonardo Roman said.

The property is now titled to the provincial government, Roman added.

He said about 1,200 policemen and teachers are going to benefit from the provincial government's low-cost housing program.

But since the case was still pending with the Supreme Court, Pastranas said the provincial government should at least suspend the conversion plan and let the agrarian reform program take its due course.

Pastranas assailed Roman for allowing the "rampant conversion" of agricultural areas into subdivisions, golf courses and tourist resorts in the province's 12 towns.

Roman on Tuesday said he had ordered the pullout of earth-moving equipment to ease the tension in the site.

However, the governor said he was bent on pursuing the P400-million housing project.

He urged protesting farmers to begin negotiations with the provincial government that would set aside 120 square meters of land for every legitimate settler.

Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

⛅ **Metro Manila** HI 32° Lo 22°	⛅ **Baguio** HI 25° Lo 12°	⛅ **Tuguegarao** HI 29° Lo 21°
⛅ **Laoag** HI 31° Lo 22°	⛅ **Clark Zone** HI 32° Lo 21°	⛅ **Tagaytay** HI 30° Lo 19°
⛅ **Legazpi** HI 30° Lo 24°	⛅ **Bacolod** HI 32° Lo 24°	☁ **Roxas** HI 30° Lo 25°
🌧 **Cebu** HI 32° Lo 25°	🌧 **Tacloban** HI 29° Lo 24°	🌧 **Gen. Santos** HI 29° Lo 23°
🌧 **Zamboanga** HI 29° Lo 25°	🌧 **Cagayan de Oro** HI 30° Lo 24°	🌧 **Davao** HI 30° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Armin P. Adina, PDI Research

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The NFE A&E is a pioneering program that offers a uniquely nonformal alternative learning system to Filipinos 15 years old and above who are unable to avail of the formal school or those who have dropped out of elementary and secondary school. This program aims to:

a) provide a system for assessing levels of literacy and other nonformal learning achievement covering basic and functional education skills and competencies designed to be comparable to that of the formal school system;

b) offer an alternative pathway by which out-of-school youth and adults earn an educational qualification comparable to the elementary and secondary school system;

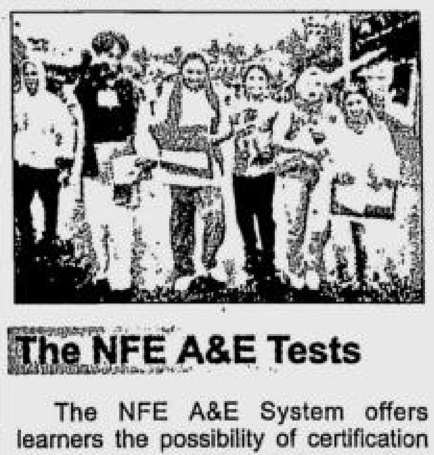
c) enable the out-of-school youth and adults to gain reading, writing and numeracy skills to meet their learning goals as they define them to gain the skills they need to improve their economic status and function more effectively in society.

The Nonformal Education Accreditation and Equivalency (NFE A&E) System was officially launched on 25 January 1999 in Aroma, Tondo, Manila.

The Department of Education, Culture and Sports - Bureau of Nonformal Education (DECS-BNFE) spearheads the implementation of the project. The driving force behind the development of a truly nonformal Filipino alternative learning system has been a commitment to break the cycle between illiteracy and poverty. It provides opportunities to the economically depressed and disadvantaged to upgrade their skills, knowledge and competencies and gain an elementary or a secondary level certificate in order to improve their lives and the lives of their families.

The NFE A&E Target Learners

The target learners of the NFE A&E System are Out-of-School Youth and Adults 15 years of age and above who are basically literate or have completed the Functional Education and Literacy Program, unemployed elementary and secondary education drop-outs and industry-based workers. Most of these target learners live below the poverty line predominantly coming from the depressed, disadvantaged, underdeveloped and underserved communities. It also tries to reach out to differently-abled men and women and those who belong to cultural communities.



Instructional Managers on their way to their respective LSDS learning sessions

The NFE A&E Tests

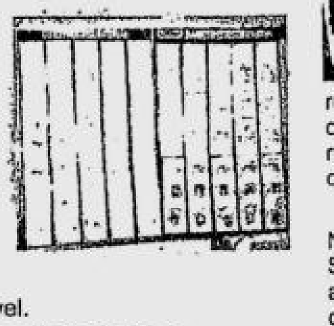
The NFE A&E System offers learners the possibility of certification through successful completion of an NFE A&E tests at two levels - Elementary and Secondary Levels. The tests at both levels are standardized paper and pencil based tests and use predominantly multiple choice based questions.

The NFE A&E Test is open to prospective examinees from either of the following categories:

- Learners who have attended or are attending learning sessions conducted by Service Providers contracted under the NFE A&E System and
- Qualified individuals who have not enrolled nor attended the NFE A&E learning sessions but have been found to be qualified to take the test after undergoing the screening process.
- Learners or individuals who have taken previous NFE A&E Tests but have not passed the tests.

Prospective examinees are generally advised to select the appropriate level of the test using the last level attended (Elementary/Secondary) in the formal school as a guide.

The Learning Materials



NFE A&E Learners have access to the following:

- 232 Self-instructional Learning Modules
- 10 Audio Tapes

In addition to supporting the certification process of the NFE A&E System, the learning materials aim to help learner's progress along a continuum of learning from basic literacy to functional literacy and ultimately to self-learning level.

BENEFITS FOR NFE A&E CERTIFICATE HOLDERS

- Development of marketable skills
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- Development of self-awareness of community rights and responsibilities
- Access to tertiary education programs of Philippine Association of State Universities and Colleges (PASUC) member institutions
- Credential for employment in government offices/positions
- Certificate for Elementary and Secondary Level Test passers comparable to the formal school system
- Access to TESDA and Meralco Foundation, Inc. Technical, Vocational Skills and Training Programs

The Department of Education, Culture and Sports - Bureau of Nonformal Education is looking for Service Providers (NGOs, LGUs, SUCs, POs,, GOs, Foundations) who are willing to support the implementation of the Nonformal Education Accreditation and Equivalency (NFE A&E) System.

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NFE A&E Ceremonial Graduation at Malacañang Palace on April 14, 2000

The NFE A&E Learning Support Delivery System (LSDS)

The NFE A&E LSDS provides an alternative pathway of learning to the formal school system, and hence, an alternative pathway to a qualification accredited as comparable to an Elementary Level certificate or a Secondary Level certificate.

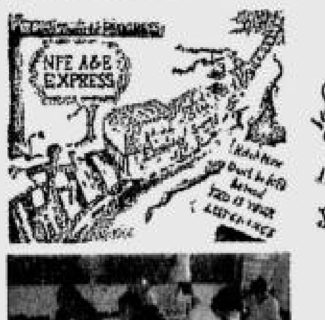
The NFE A&E LSDS is a "flexible learning system" because it breaks down traditional barriers or rigid curriculum, time, resources and accessibility, giving learners as much control as possible over what, when where and how they learn within the constraints of limited resources. The NFE A&E LSDS attempts to be as flexible as possible in order to cater to the varying learning needs and goals of its learners.

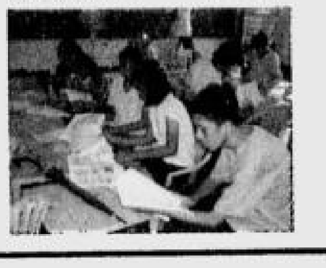
The learners in the NFE A&E Learning Support Delivery System are active agents of their own learning. NFE A&E learners are encouraged with the assistance of Instructional Managers, to define their own learning needs, identity the most appropriate pathway for tackling them and then through the use of learning modules, other supplementary materials and instructional support, to achieve their learning goals. By the end of the NFE A&E intervention, the learners are expected to have developed the capacity for self-instruction and the ability to use a variety of learning resources to develop their skills and knowledge to improve their quality of their lives.

The learning Support Delivery System (LSDS) makes up the learning intervention in the program. It provides nonformal education services through Service Providers.

These service providers are:

Individual nongovernment / government organizations, including State Colleges and Universities, Local Government Units, People's Organizations





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Edukasyon na pangmasa

Sa A&E lahat kami
Sa A&E ay kasali
Ang A&E ay kaagapay
Sa A&E may tagumpay

Court to rule today on killings

SAN JOSE, Antique—The celebrated Pangpang Bridge massacre case in Sibalom town will be decided today, 17 years after nine people were killed on the eve of the Batasang Pambansa elections on May 13, 1984.

Regional Trial Court Judge Nery Duremdes of Branch 11 will hand down at 9 a.m. his decision whether to convict former Assemblyman Arturo Pacificador, who was accused of plotting the killings.

But Pacificador, who is facing a separate murder case for the killing of his political rival Gov. Evelio Javier, has expressed confidence he would be acquitted.

He said he even plans to file his certificate of candidacy for governor if he gets acquitted in the Pangpang case.

Pacificador, a one-time deputy minister for public works and highways, is charged with murder and frustrated murder for the ambush-slaying of Javier's seven supporters at the Pangpang Bridge in Sibalom.

One of his co-accused, Vicente Vegafria, is serving time at the National Penitentiary in for the massacre. He went on trial before Pacificador did. Pacificador surrendered to authorities only on March 8, 1995.

Pacificador is detained in the 1.4-hectare Police Provincial Jail at Bugante Point here, where he is free to roam around.

Board Member Calixto Zaldivar III, whose four uncles died in the ambush, said that if acquitted, Pacificador might retaliate against those who filed the cases against him.

But he insisted that there were concrete pieces of evidence presented against Pacificador during the hearing. *Hazel Villa, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Measles kills 13 children

COTABATO CITY—Measles has claimed the lives of at least 13 children in two remote villages in Midsayap, North Cotabato in the past two weeks.

Dr. Roger Chua, regional health director, immediately sent a team of medical workers to prevent the spread of the disease.

Reports of the outbreak only reached health workers in Midsayap on Wednesday.

The medical team sent by Chua was tasked to immediately immunize children to shield them from other diseases.

The victims were children of rice farmers in the villages of Malingaw and Polomogin in Midsayap, according to Rex Torino, town information officer.

Quoting Dr. Amy Aras-Aras, town health chief, Torino said the victims did not undergo immunization despite repeated appeals from health authorities and town officials.

Barangays Malingaw and Polomogin are about 15 kilometers from the town proper.

More than a dozen other children are suffering from mild to serious measles, Torino said, adding that town Mayor Romeo Arania had also sent private and public physicians to help stop the spread of the disease. *Edwin Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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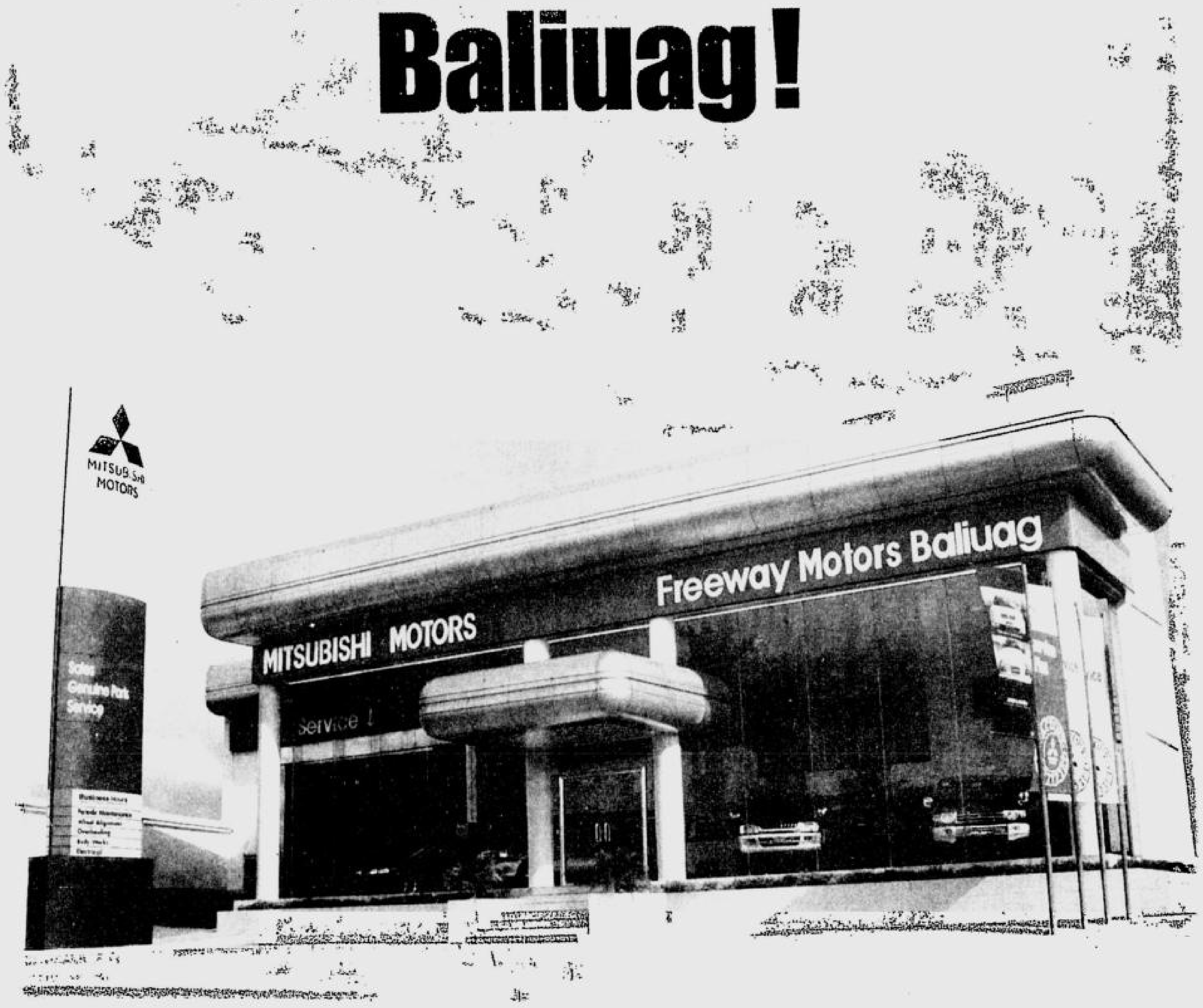

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Repair of Subic landfill approved

By Elizabeth Marcelo
PDI Central Luzon Desk

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—The Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority has given the go-signal for the repair and upgrading of the sanitary landfill at the Subic Bay Freeport.

The landfill is one of 47 sites in the former United States naval base identified as potentially contaminated with toxic wastes and other hazardous materials.

It is one of 13 sites recommended for environmental work in the 1997 Woodward Clyde environmental baseline study that was commissioned by the SBMA in 1996.

The study was conducted "to address persistent speculation in the media that parts of Subic Bay are seriously contaminated with toxic wastes generated by . . . former US Navy activities and operations."

SBMA chair Felicito Payumo announced Wednesday that the P80-million project entails the setting up of a "state-of-the-art sanitary landfill, which will improve collection and disposal efficiency of solid waste materials."

The Japanese government, through the Japan Bank for International Cooperation, is funding the project. It would be built by the Litho-Steel Construction Corp. and under the direct supervision of Woodward Clyde Philippines Inc.

The project is expected to be completed and in operation in six months.

The SBMA sought funding for the landfill repair in the absence of any clear sign of US government assistance in cleaning up its former military bases in the Philippines.

"We are committed to ensure ecological balance and protection by preventing all forms of environmental contamination through modern disposal of waste materials," Payumo said.

The Subic landfill project requires the construction of earth barriers or retaining walls to contain the projected waste volumes, a perimeter drainage system, a wastewater treatment plant, concrete sorting facilities and a modern handling system.

The barriers form part of the leachate (garbage juice) control system, which will serve as a catchment basin for the leaks. This will prevent the leachate from seeping into the water table and contaminating water sources in the freeport.

Gas vents will also be installed to minimize fire hazards. Methane gas, which is generated in dump sites, causes spontaneous combustion.

A CASE OF 'WHODUNIT'

Jess: 1st female PMA graduate to die

By Frank Cimatu
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

STA. CRUZ, Ilocos Sur—Maj. Ramon Dizon of the 191st unit of the Army's Military Police Battalion at Fort Bonifacio in Makati City has gotten accustomed to be awakened by the voice of 2nd Lt. Jessica Chavez barking out orders to her men every 7 a.m.

"She meets her platoon in front of my office so I'm used to hearing her bark orders first (thing) in the morning," Dizon said.

But minutes before 7 a.m. on Feb. 9, Dizon, after a tiring day, did not hear Jess, as he fondly called Chavez.

He did not even hear the single shot that came from her room about 50 meters away. Only a female cook and another kitchen help heard the shot.

What followed was, according to Dizon, "every commanding officer's nightmare."

Chavez, 22, was not only the first casualty of the Philippine Military Academy's "Sanghaya" Class of 2000. She was, most importantly, the first female graduate of PMA to die.

Test case

Lawmakers and military officers have been debating on the effect of assigning women to combat duties, and the first test case has come to a death as puzzling as this.

Dizon said the first to barge into the room was a female private.

"Jess is lying down (in) her bed. As soon as she found out that she was hit, she shouted for help," Dizon said. "Our initial reaction was to save her but when we brought her to the hospital, she was declared dead on arrival."

Chavez was apparently killed by a single wound in her chest. Her service weapon, a .45 cal. pistol, was in her hand, Dizon recalled.

"But that does not mean that it was the same weapon that killed her," he said.

Alone

The Southern Police Command, whose office was about half a kilometer away from the MP barracks, conducted the investigation. The police also took the service weapon of Chavez's roommate, 2nd Lt. Nellie Escanda.

2ND LT. JESSICA Chavez: A death too sudden, too puzzling.

Escanda was in Tanay, Rizal, during that time and Chavez was presumably alone in her room.

Dizon said he ordered all his men to undergo paraffin tests that same day.

"We will turn in all pieces of evidence. We really wanted an investigation so we know what really happened. This is also for our peace of mind," Dizon said.

Dizon called up Chavez's parents here later that afternoon.

Her father, Efren Chavez, received the message at about 8:30 a.m. of Feb. 9 through cellular phone from their house in Barangay Padaoil here, about 7 kilometers of mostly rugged trail from the town center. The Chavezes maintain their business of trading tobacco and other buy-and-sell goods at the town center.

"He told me to close shop and told me that Jessica was seriously wounded," Chavez's wife Melwida recalled in Filipino. "Then Major Dizon called again and my husband told me Jessica is dead."

When the Chavezes arrived at Fort Bonifacio Friday night, they allowed an autopsy on the body to determine the cause of death.

Suspicion

Because the autopsy was done on a weekend, the initial results had to be known only on Monday, something the parents found suspicious.

"What is taking the autopsy results a long time?" Melwida asked. "Understandably, as parents, we need to find out the truth."

The initial investigation pointed to accidental firing.

Joseph Calano, a champion shooter in Baguio City, said it was very unlikely for somebody committing suicide to shoot oneself in the chest.

But Calano also said cleaning one's loaded pistol by pointing it at him or her is also "highly irregular," especially for somebody who has been taught to be very careful and professional with guns while at the PMA.

Ilocos Sur Vice Gov. Deogracias Savellano asked for a separate autopsy by the National Bureau of Investigation. The autopsy results, including the paraffin tests on Chavez and the other MP men, have yet to be released.

The victim's parents refused to acknowledge that their daughter committed suicide.

Suicide ruled out

"Don't even write suicide," her father Efren swore in front of Jessica's coffin. "We are God-fearing people, especially Jessica. She's very religious."

Melwida Chavez said her daughter did not show any sign of despair during those times.

She said her daughter had been texting or calling her often enough to know that.

Her last text message which Melwida received at about 8:30 p.m. Thursday said she had just come from a computer school and was on her way to her barracks.

Dizon said Jessica was in his office later that night, tinkering with his computer.

"She has dismantled my computer. I told her 'You haven't taken your supper.' She answered, 'I'll just finish this.' I said, 'Take your supper. Your parents might scold me. Take a rest,'" Dizon recalled.

He said he went to another office where he worked until midnight and returned to his office at the MP unit where he has a bed.

When 2nd Lt. Jinky Perez, a member of PMA Class of 2000, heard about Jessica's death, she secretly cried for her *mistah*,

In shock

"I was obviously in shock but what can we do?" she said.

Perez, 25, was here to accompany Chavez's body early Monday morning.

"You can't say anything negative about Jessica. She's kind, helpful, sweet. She's the bravest in our class," she said in Filipino.

The Sanghaya Class was the fourth class in the PMA to have female graduates. There were 10 women among the 243 graduates of the Class.

"We were very close. We communicate with each other often. We were already thinking of attending the alumni reunion this weekend," Perez said.

She said death is a reality in military life. "But we're still in disbelief," she said.

"She's sweet. She easily gets along with the officers and her men. But when we are out on the field, we have to act professionally," Dizon said.

"She's kind and intelligent. When she first came here (in August) she had little knowledge in computer but after a few months she could already repair computers," Dizon said.

"Because she was the youngest and a woman, we were very particular about her. But we make it a point not to baby her," he said.

"Jessica was Major Dizon's favorite and also my husband's," Melwida said.

Chavez was born here on Aug. 17, 1978. The eldest of three children, Jessica was said to be a responsible daughter and a model for her siblings Marco, 21, and Clarissa, 8.

Her grandmother Ernesta Mangaoil, who raised Chavez, said she was a very dutiful grandchild.

"She knew that she and Marco would be taking college together so she went to the PMA to lighten up her parents' (financial) load," Mangaoil said in Ilocano.

Jessica was taking up engineering at the Saint Louis University in Baguio City when she passed the PMA entrance examinations.

"Even when she was in third year high school (in St. Joseph School in Candon, Ilocos Sur), she already told me that she wanted to be a pilot but she was an inch shorter than the 5'4" (height requirement)," her father said.

Jessica was training to be a computer signal officer assigned to the Signal Corps of the MP at the time of her death.

Chavez will be buried at the San Jose Cemetery here on Feb. 24.

Candidate for DOH post accused of land grabbing

MASANTOL, Pampanga—Around 1,000 families displaced by a Japanese-funded flood control project here are appealing to President Macapagal-Arroyo not to appoint former Masantol Mayor Epifanio Lacap as health undersecretary.

Officials and members of the Masantol Farms Development Cooperative (Mafadeco), in a statement distributed during a meeting here Wednesday, accused Lacap of being a "land grabber."

Crisanto La Paz, Mafadeco chair, said his group issued the statement after confirming Tuesday that Lacap, a doctor, was on the shortlist of appointees to the Department of Health.

Lacap, who also ventured into the construction business, and his wife, Mayor Corazon Lacap, are the subjects of two pending complaints filed in June last year before the Office of the Ombudsman, La Paz said.

In the criminal and administrative complaints before the Ombudsman, the Lacap couple allegedly grabbed 135 hectares of land within the 14-km span of the high water channel of the Pampanga Delta Development Project (PDDP) flood control component.

Mayor Lacap appointed her husband as the PDDP municipal project manager, granting him the right to issue leases in the contested channel, documents attached to a report of a congressional investigation showed.

Mayor Lacap, in several letters to the Department of Public Works and Highways and the Department of Interior and Local Government, denied the allegations of land grabbing hurled against her and her husband.

The couple could not be reached for comment on Wednesday. In earlier interviews, however, the mayor continued to attribute the controversy to local political wranglings.

The couple, according to the complaint, gave the land to nontillers, apparently political supporters and dummies, immediately depriving 335 families of land that the DPWH earmarked in 1999 for legitimate tenants and landowners displaced by the P2.9-billion project. ***Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

Cordillera strawberry production low

Potentials not being maximized by farmers, say experts at Benguet U

By Avigail Olarte
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Agriculture officials in Benguet, the country's strawberry capital, are alarmed over the poor quality of strawberries being produced in the province, saying the crop's potentials are not being maximized by farmers.

Dr. Danilo Padua, dean of the Benguet State University's (BSU) College of Agriculture, said the potential of the strawberry industry in the country was not being maximized mainly due to lack of funding and technology.

"The demand for fresh fruit consumption and the processing of strawberry is high. Strawberry is an export winner, a potential dollar-earner," he said.

The National Research System declared the strawberry as the flagship crop of the Cordillera in 1999.

Padua said strawberries here suffer from diseases like fruit rot, leaf diseases, fungus and mite (tiny insects that suck the sap of strawberry plants which stunt their growth) infestation due to the use of unclean planting materials by farmers.

"Planting materials from abroad do not undergo quarantine purification. These plants carry foreign diseases that are passed on to our plants," he said.

Fertilizer danger

He also warned that commercial fertilizers used to combat these diseases and insects endanger the health of strawberry consumers.

He said chemicals, like ammonium sulfate, urea and nitrate in fertilizers that are applied on strawberry plants, if taken in large doses, would cause heart diseases and respiratory impairment.

"It's still safe to eat strawberries but we have to do something about it now," Padua said.

The BSU finances a study on the use of organic fertilizers on strawberry plants. He said commercial fertilizers increase the soil's acidity, making it hard for water to seep into the roots. These fertilizers also pollute the valley's water sources, he said.

New breed of mites

Padua said there is still no effective chemical to curb the increase of cyclamen mites, a new breed of mites attacking the plants.

"The mites are growing in alarming proportions. We are now enlisting the help of the Department of Agriculture to solve the problem," he said.

According to him, some farmers have abandoned their farms altogether and many have downsized their plantation areas since labor costs have become prohibitive.

The Cordilleras, having more than 520 strawberry farmers in a total plantation area of 77 hectares, produces an average of 1,000 tons of strawberries a year.

The actual demand of the local market is 2,000 tons a year.

The major local commercial consumers of strawberry are the Consolidated Food Corp., RFM (Selecta), Dunkin Donuts, Magnolia and other processing plants.

Padua said jam producers in the Cordillera also suffer from a lack of strawberry supply. He said the strawberry wine industry has been neglected since producers cannot afford the high costs of wine making.

Exports

He said Benguet exported frozen and semi-processed berries to Japan and Hong Kong five years ago. However, the sudden decrease in production affected the region's hopes in the export market.

"Korea, Japan, Hong Kong and Singapore are also experiencing (a) shortfall in strawberry supply. *Maganda sanang* market *ito ng* Pilipinas," he said.

The BSU needs at least P150,000 for research, laboratory tests and other inputs for its strawberry hybridization project that aims to produce a Philippine variety of the strawberry, he said.

The Toyonoka, Tioga, Seascape and Sweet Charlie strawberry varieties—imported from Japan and the United States—are among the main varieties used by farmers in the region.

Iloilo docs offer free surgery to Erap to keep him in RP

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—A group of doctors here is offering free medical services to operate on the glaucoma of ousted President Joseph Estrada.

According to the group, the offer was not actually a show of love for the ousted President especially on Valentine's Day but to make him stay in the country and face the string of criminal and administrative charges filed against him.

"If he wants, we could launch a medical mission to treat his glaucoma," said Kristin Treñas, spokesperson of Code Resign Estrada Dali (Code Red), a group of doctors and other medical professionals that had joined protests demanding the resignation of Estrada.

The 300-strong Code Red is among the groups under the Ilonggo Solidarity Campaign for the Removal of Erap (I-SCRAP Erap).

In October, it led a signature campaign declaring Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago *persona non grata*. The signature campaign continues to this day.

Treñas told a press conference on Tuesday that the deposed President does not have to go abroad because even resident physicians of the West Visayas Medical Center, a tertiary hospital, can treat his eye ailment.

She added that her group hoped that the Macapagal administration would not soften its stand not to allow Mr. Estrada to go abroad, even for a medical treatment.

Glaucoma is an eye ailment caused by increased pressure in the eye resulting in the deformation and malfunction of the eye's drainage structure.

If left untreated, it can cause irreversible damage to the optic nerve and retinal fibers resulting in permanent loss of vision. Its symptoms are eye pain, headache, nausea and blurred vision.

Estrada had planned to fly to the United States so he could have an eye surgery in March. But in an interview over GMA-7 in Manila Tuesday night, Estrada said he would just ask his US-based doctors to come to the country and perform the surgery.

Still, Estrada's plan to go abroad had drawn protests, not just from lawmakers, but also from human rights lawyers and members of militant groups, who alleged that the supposed eye surgery was just a ploy to escape prosecution.

The justice department has imposed a travel ban on Estrada who faces six cases, including plunder, in the Office of the Ombudsman. Plunder is a non-bailable offense punishable by death.

Estrada was ousted following a vote of 11 senators perceived loyal to him rejecting a prosecution move to open a second set of documents on several more alleged bank accounts of the ousted President.

The documents were opened on Wednesday upon the request of Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr.

The documents showed that a certain Jose Velarde, whom many believe was an alias of Estrada, amassed P3 billion in a year in several banks.

The documents also showed that the accounts have been withdrawn.

An executive of Equitable-PCI Bank, Clarissa Ocampo, earlier testified during Estrada's impeachment trial that she saw the President sign a set of bank documents under the name Jose Velarde.

5 persons die in Quezon fire

LUCBAN, Quezon—Five persons, including an 86-year-old woman, died in a fire that destroyed 27 houses in Barangay 6 here early Wednesday.

Senior Supt. Charlemagne Alejandrino, Quezon police director, identified the victims as Magdalena Abulad, age unknown; Editha Bojiladar, 53; Ricardo Cruz, 32; and Adelina Ladines, 50.

Alejandrino said Abulad and Bojiladar were burned beyond recognition while Cruz was electrocuted as he tried to save his belongings.

Ladines died of a heart attack.

Alejandrino said some 60 families were displaced by the fire.

He said the fire started at around 4 a.m. at the kitchen of Abulad who was alone in the house.

Vice Mayor Armando Abutal said the municipal council had approved a resolution appropriating P3,000 for each family. ***Arnel Avila, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Milk formula raises blood pressure, study says

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
PDI Visayas Bureau

BABIES given infant formula grow up to have higher blood pressure than those given breast milk, a new research suggested.

The findings, published in the Lancet medical journal, come from the first experimental study of how early nutrition influences blood pressure, a sign of heart disease later in life.

Experts say the results bolster the theory that an infant's diet influences the risk of several diseases in adulthood. Breast-feeding is also considered better for a child's intelligence.

Earlier studies have noted that adults with high blood pressure tended to have been fed formula as babies. But none of these studies took account of scores of other factors that raise blood pressure, such as bad diet in adulthood, stress and lack of exercise.

The new study at the Institute of Child Health in London involved pre-term babies, who are sometimes not strong enough to suck or may need a more concentrated formula. This eliminated the ethical problem of experimenting with healthy full-term babies whose mothers can easily breast-feed exclusively.

"When you put this together with the two observational studies linking formula to higher blood pressure in full-term babies, there's a strong possibility these results would apply to healthy full-term babies," Lancet quoted one of the researchers, Dr. Alan Lucas.

Nearly 20 years ago, the researchers randomly divided 216 pre-term babies into three groups: One received donated breast milk, the second received infant formula made for pre-term babies and the third received regular infant formula. Each diet, started within 48 hours of birth, was used as a sole food or as a supplement to mother's milk, depending on what the mother wanted to do.

The infants remained in the study until they weighed heavy enough to go home, usually after a month. The children returned about 16 years later to have their blood pressure measured.

There were two comparisons. One compared breast milk with pre-term formula, the other compared pre-term formula with regular formula.

"Just one month of one diet rather than another had a major impact," Lucas said. "We created a situation where the only difference between them was what they were fed in the first month of life."

The researchers found that the diastolic pressure reading (the lowest arterial blood pressure) was 3.2 points lower among those fed with breast milk than those given pre-term formula. The systolic pressure (the highest arterial blood pressure) was 2.7 points lower.

Within the formula-fed group, babies with the highest proportion of formula to mother's milk ended up with the highest blood pressure.

There was no difference in blood pressure between the groups fed pre-term formula and regular formula, which contain different nutrients.

The results were not related to birth weight, the study said.

"These few millimeters may look small, but it's a large effect," Lucas said.

Several US heart disease studies have found that if an adult's diastolic blood pressure was lowered by just two points, the prevalence of high blood pressure would drop by 17 percent, the risk of heart disease would fall by 6 percent and the risk of stroke and heart attacks would drop by 15 percent, he said.

"The most likely thing is there's something in breast milk that protects (babies)," Lucas said.

Identifying the specific differences in the composition of human milk and commercial formula that produced the difference in blood pressure is important for making better infant formula, said Susan Roberts, an expert at Tufts University's Human Nutrition Research Center in Boston, who was not connected with the study.

The study discounted any relation between high blood pressure among teens and sodium and total fat in the infant milk or formula, she said.

Church doctrine vs Masons stirs controversy in N. Ecija

SAN JOSE CITY—The prohibition of the Catholic Church here on members of the Free and Accepted Masons to act as wedding sponsors or receive Catholic sacraments has caused controversies, misunderstanding and ill-feelings among the people concerned and the priests implementing it.

On two occasions last Sunday, a politician was barred from acting as a wedding sponsor while a deceased medical doctor was denied Catholic funeral rites.

The politician told the INQUIRER that he was approached by the priest when he was about to sign the marriage contract of the newlyweds as one of the sponsors and was asked if he is a Mason.

When he said "yes," the priest asked him not to sign the contract as the Church prohibits a Mason to stand as wedding sponsors.

Though a bit embarrassed, the politician said he did not insist on signing the document. But all throughout the wedding ceremony, he was inside the Mary Help of Christian Church standing as one of the sponsors in the wedding.

The couple's parents and relatives could not do anything about the Church's prohibition.

In another church here, the priest refused to give the last rites to a medical doctor who was a Mason.

A source from the Catholic diocese said the priests and the Catholic faithful in the diocese were recently reminded, through a pastoral letter, by Bishop Leo Drona of the Catholic Church's prohibitions concerning Masons.

Among these are the prohibitions on the giving of communion, membership in Catholic organizations, giving of last rites and sponsorships in weddings and baptisms for Masons.

The letter said this prohibition has not been changed and is effective in all Catholic churches in the world.

Drona, in his letter, said this prohibition is mentioned in such documents as "Humanus Genus" of Pope Leo XIII issued on Nov. 9, 1846; the "Church Discipline on Masonic Associations" of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Vatican City on Nov. 26, 1983; and several documents from the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines.

Drona said the prohibition is "not meant to judge the personhood of any particular Mason."

He advised Catholics, who are members of the Freemasonry, to study the philosophy and principles of the organization and "find for themselves that these are opposed to the doctrines of the Catholic Church."

Anselmo Roque, PDI Central Luzon Desk

TRIVIA: Do you know where the expression "once in a blue moon" came from? This idiomatic expression, which has come to pertain to anything that happens rarely, traces its roots to an astronomical phenomenon known as the "blue moon", that rare instance when the earth sees two full moons in a span of one month. This happens when the moon's cycle overlaps with our calendar months.

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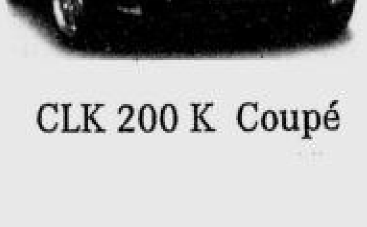
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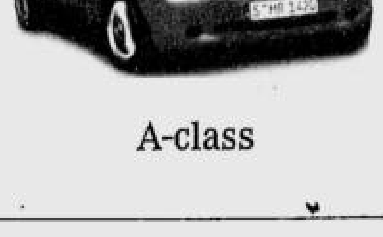
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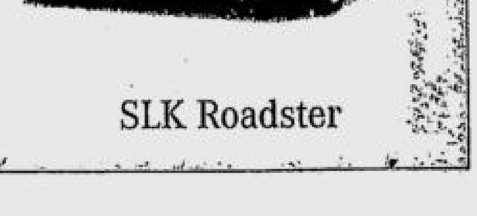
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No VIP treatment for Erap at QC jail, says warden

By Philip C. Tubeza

NO SWIMMING pool ringed with white sand and powered by an artificial wave-making machine awaits deposed President Joseph Estrada in the event that he is detained at the Quezon City Jail, the warden said yesterday.

Supt. James Labordo, the warden of the overcrowded prison, told reporters that he could not possibly give special treatment to the disgraced Estrada, who is believed to have built several mansions for his various families, including the infamous "Boracay" villa in New Manila.

Estrada, if arrested by order of the Sandiganbayan, would likely be brought to the Quezon City Jail, like other government officials ordered arrested by the anti-graft court.

Officials have said that the former President could be arrested if the Ombudsman forwards non-bailable cases against him to the Sandiganbayan.

Like Caloocan Mayor Reynaldo Malonzo, who was jailed on charges of graft for around 24 hours in June 1999, Estrada would have to mingle with common criminals behind bars.

"We can't give him a separate cell for his own use because our cells are already overcrowded," Labordo said.

The warden said he would be meeting with other prison officials to discuss the possible imprisonment of the former Chief Executive.

But he added that even if Mr. Estrada were to be ordered confined to the Quezon City Jail, Labordo would ask that the deposed President be imprisoned instead at the newly built Metro Manila Rehabilitation Center in Taguig.

That would spare Labordo and his men the headache of guarding the man who was once the highest official in the land.

Labordo said he was particularly concerned over the number of Estrada supporters that might descend on the prison.

He said the ousted leader would be allowed visitors during regular visiting hours, or from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

"We will strictly implement this. We will not give any extension," Labordo said, but added that Estrada's lawyers would be exempted from the rule.

The warden said that the city jail was constructed to accommodate only 800 prisoners. But as of last count, the jail had around 1,700 prisoners behind its walls.

The jail is so crowded that Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) guards and officials have set up *nipa* huts on top of one of the jail houses for their own quarters.

Labordo said, however, that the BJMP is set to make certain "adjustments" to make sure that the prison is safe and the inmates, orderly, in case Estrada is arrested.

The warden said he had asked for more prison guards to beef up security. The jail is supposed to have 220 guards but only has 150 at the moment, he added.

If Estrada ends up spending any time in jail, he might derive some comfort from knowing that Romeo Jalosjos, the notorious congressman convicted of rape, was able to construct his own miniature "villa" in the National Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa.

5 banks turn over Estrada accounts

(From page A1)

cret account of Estrada under the name of "Jose Velarde."

But the Senate court barred House prosecutors access to the sealed documents, sparking the so-called "Edsa People Power II" that toppled Estrada and catapulted Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to the presidency.

Desierto said the bank records in his office's possession showed that Estrada maintained an account with the Metrobank branch in San Juan and three accounts with the Security Bank branch also in San Juan.

Both Gomez and Estrada also had accounts with Asia United Bank. Gomez, the mother of JV Ejercito, also has an account with the Metrobank branch in Greenhills, San Juan, and another account with a Security Bank branch that Desierto did not disclose.

Enriquez also has an account with the Security Bank branch in San Juan.

Desierto, however, requested the INQUIRER to withhold the exact amount contained in each of the accounts so as not to jeopardize the ongoing investigation by the Ombudsman Fact-Finding and Intelligence Bureau (FFIB).

The FFIB, chaired by lawyer Pelagio Apostol, is conducting a probe of the forfeiture case filed by private prosecutors and 22 nongovernment organizations.

Forfeiture case

In the forfeiture case, the private prosecutors said that Estrada had deposits in several banks either "in his name, in his different aliases or number/letter accounts or held in the name of or jointly with his wife, his mistresses and cronies."

They said the bank assets should be forfeited in favor of the government as these were either ill-gotten or unexplained wealth that the former President did not declare in his Statement of Assets and Liabilities.

Estrada declared a net worth of only P35 million in his 1999 Statement of Assets and Liabilities.

6 other complaints

In their 16-page complaint, the private prosecutors and nongovernment organizations pointed out that Estrada "cannot receive during his tenure any other emolument from the government or any other sources" other than from his official salary.

Estrada received an annual salary of P557,000 as President and P240,000 as Vice President.

Estrada also faces six other complaints filed with the Ombudsman, including plunder, graft, malversation of public documents, perjury and bribery.

The Ombudsman is expected to file the cases in the Sandiganbayan as soon as the Supreme Court resolves the twin issues of the legitimacy of the Macapagal presidency and the immunity from prosecution of Estrada.

Pro-Erap supporters rally at SC

(From page A1)

Later, dozens of Estrada supporters scuffled with police as they tried to storm the Supreme Court building.

At least three loyalists managed to sneak through a phalanx of riot police and climbed the iron-grilled fence of the court building but were forcibly brought down.

A heated confrontation followed, triggering a 15-minute scuffle, with protesters throwing stones and empty water bottles at police who fought back with batons and shields.

Several officers were hit by stones but there were no reports of serious injuries or arrests. The protesters were later chased away and they joined the bigger group.

At least two fire trucks were sent to the scene, ready to hose down the group if the situation spun out of control, police were quoted as saying.

The Estrada supporters, who came from Tondo, Manila, Mandaluyong City and Estrada's hometown of San Juan, were herded to the intersection of Padre Faura and Taft Avenue, which they blocked with a bus and several jeepneys.

Traffic on both lanes of Taft was in a gridlock for three hours. Towards noon, the loyalists dwindled to about 300 and were moved to the northbound lane.

Speakers at the rally took turns haranguing President Macapagal-Arroyo as well as Cabinet and military officials who defected to her camp during the Edsa II popular coup that toppled Estrada.

"Justice for Erap is justice for the poor," read one of the pros' placards.

Language problem

The protesters were apparently not kept abreast of the developments in the court because they tried to storm the Supreme Court after the session to demand that Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. and Associate Justice Artemio Panganiban inhibit themselves from the hearings.

A group of Estrada supporters, who were listening to lawyers' oral arguments aired over radio, told the INQUIRER they could not understand the legalistic discussion.

"We don't understand the English. How will we know if they're being fair?" a Tondo market vendor who identified herself only as Normida said in Filipino. "But it doesn't matter, as long as we're here to show support for Erap."

WPD director Chief Supt. Avelino Razon Jr. told the demonstrators to keep their rally peaceful and disperse before rush hour.

But a leader of the protesters was quoted by radio reports as saying the crowd may camp outside the high court to put pressure on the justices to reinstate Estrada as president.

'Shamelessness'

On the other hand, anti-Estrada demonstrators from the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) and the Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) held their own rally in front of the Department of Justice building near the court building.

The militant groups promised that they would not stop holding protest actions until Estrada was behind bars.

"What kind of shamelessness and one-upmanship is this?" asked Bayan secretary general Teodoro Casiño. "Estrada is practically asking the high court to undo People Power II and cover up his terrible record."

KMU chair and Bayan Muna party vice president Crispin Beltran said that militant and people's groups would not be distracted from their goal of seeing Estrada incarcerated.

He added that militant groups would not let the Estrada family "do what the Marcos family did and get cleared of the charges against them."

Infamous records

"Since Estrada already has set some infamous records—first actor to be president of the country, most sexist president, first president to be impeached—we'll help him win one more—first president to be jailed for plunder, corruption and numerous criminal charges," Beltran added.

Satur Ocampo, president of the party-list group Bayan Muna, said the high court should dismiss Estrada's petitions.

He said Bayan Muna and its allied groups would take a hard-line stand against Estrada and his cronies.

"Estrada must accept his fate. History is not kind to tyrants and plunderers," he said.

The Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas and Pamalakaya also warned the Supreme Court against reversing its earlier decision against Estrada.

"The rural folk will go back to the capital and stage massive protests if the SC reverses the verdict of history in favor of" Estrada, said Gerry Albert Corpuz, Pamalakaya information officer.

"The second people power is not a motion picture good for a two-week run, it is a historical verdict," he added.

Guingona confident

Also yesterday, Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr. expressed confidence that the high court would uphold the legitimacy of the Macapagal administration, as it did when the Chief Justice installed her on Jan. 20.

He noted that Ms Macapagal was sworn in "not as acting President but as President of the Republic of the Philippines. There is an implied recognition of the entire Supreme Court."

He also pointed out that her presidency is recognized by the two other branches of government—the judiciary and the legislature.

"I foresee that the presidency of Gloria will be upheld because she is the President de jure and de facto," said Guingona, whom Estrada allies call the "acting" Vice President.

"You have a government in operation recognized by the three branches of government," Guingona said.

Like love letter

He said Congress also recognized Ms Macapagal's presidency when both chambers unanimously confirmed his nomination as Vice President, in effect acknowledging the vice presidency had been vacant.

Two senators—Miriam Defensor-Santiago and Juan Ponce Enrile—voted with reservation in confirming Guingona's nomination, citing pending questions in the high court.

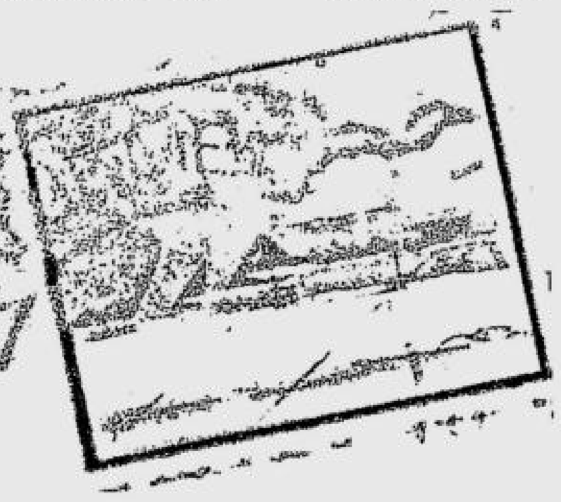
Guingona also explained that Ms Macapagal became the de jure President on the basis of the supposed "constructive resignation" expressed in Estrada's letter announcing that he would leave Malacañang.

Guingona also said that Estrada had in effect resigned since "he left willingly, peacefully and even in a sentimental manner."

He likened Estrada's letter to a love letter without the words "I love you."

"When you propose to a woman, you don't necessarily have to say 'I love you.' From your letter, she can have no other conclusion than you love her, which is more exciting sometimes." Guingona said.

With a report from AFP



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SC – Round 1 . . .

(From page A1)

The Supreme Court ordered the two parties to file their written arguments within five days. Each was given another two days to submit a reply to the other.

The tribunal will start deliberations on Estrada's suits after the two parties shall have complied with the order.

Respect

At the hearing, Justice Jose Vitug asked Desierto if his office could stop its investigation on the charges of plunder, bribery and corruption against Estrada even just out of respect to the tribunal which had two suits pending before it.

Estrada had earlier sought a temporary restraining order to stop the Ombudsman's investigation.

Desierto said, however, that he could no longer stop the preliminary investigation as this was already "finished" and "submitted for resolution."

He said all he could do to accommodate the tribunal's request was not to issue a resolution or file charges against Estrada in the seven-day period.

"The (five members of the) panel need the time to evaluate the case carefully and study the voluminous documents. So they can use that time for this purpose," Desierto said.

He told reporters later that "this does not preclude the Office of the Ombudsman from publicly divulging the results of its preliminary investigation after the special panel shall have completed its resolution."

'Prejudicial publicity'

Saguisag asked the high court to stop the proceedings of the Ombudsman against his client, claiming there was "prejudicial publicity" against Estrada.

He suggested that the Ombudsman continue with the proceedings against Estrada after a "cooling-off period," probably after the May elections.

Agabin said negative media publicity had imposed tremendous pressure on Desierto to be biased against Estrada.

He noted that Desierto had even vowed to file a case against Estrada before the Sandiganbayan.

He said that with Desierto's statement, the five-member special panel could not be expected to make a contrary recommendation.

Desierto denied this, saying his previous statements were made with the qualification that sufficient evidence would back any case that would be filed against Estrada.

He later told reporters that he "cannot be pressured by any party or groups."

"Based on the records, the Ombudsman made many unpopular decisions. This made me unpopular because I base my actions only on law and evidence, never on popular sentiments," he said.

During the oral arguments, Bellosillo asked whether Estrada would reclaim the presidency any time.

Agabin said Estrada would not do so unless he managed to win back the support of the military and the people, as well as the recognition of foreign governments.

Perez said Estrada "should be relegated to oblivion."

"He will be remembered as the only President who has been impeached. He will be remembered as claiming to be President, not to exercise the power and duties of the President but solely to avoid prosecution," Perez said.

The justice secretary also said Ms Macapagal's presidency had been recognized by both chambers of Congress and foreign governments, and was supported by the military, the police and the people.

Moreover, he said, both the Senate and the House of Representatives confirmed the nomination of Teofisto Guingona Jr. as Vice President.

Perez also denied Estrada's charge that he was toppled by mob rule, saying that Estrada fell because "he could not rule anymore—not because of the military, not because of the police alone, but because the people would not obey him anymore."

In an interview with global TV network CNN aired early yesterday, Estrada reiterated that Ms Macapagal "assumed office through mob rule."

Figurehead

Perez also told the Supreme Court that Ms Macapagal's installation as President on Jan. 20 narrowly averted a coup to establish a junta with Estrada as figurehead.

Asked if the country ran the risk of a coup the day before Estrada was forced from office, Perez replied: "The danger started even before that. There were briefings to the effect that a joint civilian-military junta might take over with the former President as titular head. It became paramount that we follow the Constitution and give the reins of government to the constitutional successor."

Perez later told reporters that the threat developed during Estrada's impeachment trial.

"It was a real danger," he said without specifying who was behind the threat.

He said Estrada would have been retained as "figurehead, a puppet."

The plans were "overtaken by events," Perez said, referring to the growing protests on Edsa and elsewhere in the country.

But Saguisag told the high court that Estrada was driven from Malacañang by an angry mob that was threatening to harm him and his family.

"If enough people march on the streets and threaten the first family, this would be an accepted way of changing the president of this country," he said.

Saguisag also pointed out that Estrada had "no resignation letter."

"It is not legally permissible for the President to resign," he said, adding that Estrada stepped down "out of prudential consideration" because of threats from protesters who had surrounded Malacañang.

Toothpaste

The highly charged debate that began at noon was marked by light moments.

At one point, Perez argued that Estrada could no longer get back the presidency as it would be "like putting toothpaste back into the tube."

Justice Vicente Mendoza retorted that it was not "altogether to put toothpaste back into the tube."

Mendoza said Perez could have come across with a better message had he likened Estrada's situation to "lost virginity," which no one could ever get back. ***With reports from AP, AFP and Michael Lim Ubac***

Davide, Panganiban inhibit selves

(From page A1)

en banc, Panganiban said he, too, would stand aside.

"I am voluntarily inhibiting myself *pro hac vie* (for this occasion), not because (Saguisag) has proven any legal ground therefor, but because I do not wish to give him or anyone else any excuse to cast any doubt on the integrity of these proceedings and of the decision that this court may render in these cases of transcendental importance to the nation," Panganiban said.

Davide administered the oath of office to Ms Macapagal at noon last Jan. 20 at the Edsa Shrine after a unanimous decision by 12 justices to grant him that authority.

At yesterday's oral arguments for the petition for a temporary restraining order filed by Estrada against Ombudsman Aniano Desierto, a copy of Ms Macapagal's Jan. 20 letter to the Supreme Court was released.

Renato Corona, Ms Macapagal's spokesperson and chief of staff, yesterday said the letter was faxed to Davide's office upon the Chief Justice's request.

In the three-paragraph letter, then Vice President Macapagal informed the tribunal that Estrada was "permanently incapable of performing the duties of his office, resulting in his permanent disability to govern and serve his unexpired term."

"Almost all of his Cabinet members have resigned, and the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police have withdrawn their support for (Estrada). Civil society has likewise refused to recognize him as president," she said.

Ms Macapagal said she was "assuming the position of President of the Republic of the Philippines," and asked Davide to administer to her the oath of office.

She invited all the justices of the high court to attend the oath-taking.

In writing

Corona said Davide had requested that Ms Macapagal formalize and put in writing her request that she be sworn in as President.

Speaking in Filipino, Corona said Davide was not comfortable that the request be coursed only by telephone.

Corona said it was he who had asked Davide to administer the oath of office to Ms Macapagal.

He quoted the Chief Justice as saying: "That's okay. This is a historical moment. Let's do it properly, in a formal way."

He said "that's why there was the letter."

Corona said the first call to Davide was made at 10:30 a.m. of Jan. 20. Ms Macapagal's letter was faxed to Davide's office between 10:30 and 11:30 a.m.

At 12 noon, Ms Macapagal was sworn in as President at the Edsa Shrine.

The original letter was sent to the Supreme Court on Jan. 22, Corona said.

He said that even before he phoned Davide on Jan. 20, the justices had already convened on their own and decided to allow the oath-taking of Ms Macapagal as President.

Davide was said to have allowed the oath-taking to avert possible bloodshed on Mendiola, where protesters had massed.

Corona said the Supreme Court's resolution authorizing Davide to swear in Ms Macapagal as President "in effect declared the presidency vacant."

In questioning the validity of Ms Macapagal's assumption of the presidency, Estrada said she was merely the "acting President" because the high court had failed to determine that the presidency was vacant.

Doubtful

Saguisag has expressed doubt over the existence of Ms Macapagal's letter early on.

He based his position on a TV interview aired hours after Ms Macapagal took her oath, wherein she allegedly denied having written any letter to the high court.

But Justice Secretary Hernando Perez said it was already clear at the time that "there was a vacuum in the government" because Estrada had lost the support of the military, the police, and even the people he trusted most.

At the hearing, Justice Jose Melo noted that there must have been a misunderstanding because in the transcript of the TV interview, Ms Macapagal was not specifically asked if she had written a letter to the tribunal.

"Apparently, the President was asked if she asked for the opinion of the Supreme Court, and she said no. We can vouch for the fact that, indeed, she did not ask the court for an opinion," Melo said.

Confident

Malacañang is confident that it will win the case before the Supreme Court.

"We're confident about the strength of our case and of our position to win the case," Corona said.

Corona also said it was only Estrada who believed that he was still the president.

According to Corona, the tribunal decided to hear Estrada's petition because this was part of the accepted court procedures.

"*De kahon yan*. If somebody files a petition, the other party is given the chance to answer it," he said, adding:

"This is the requirement in law. It is part of due process."

Corona said Malacañang would also want the case to be heard on its merits because it was a "precedent" and the discussions and the resulting decision would "enrich Philippine jurisprudence."

"This is a very important, historical case since this is the first time that this question about the presidency is raised," he said.

He pointed out that it would also be good if all the issues would be aired in the proper venue and put on record.

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Self-repairing . . .

(From page A1)

back for me, I don't know which direction to go," Scott White said, a professor of aeronautical engineering at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign who led the study.

Composite materials consist of fibers of glass, carbon or other substances mixed with a resin.

Fiberglass is one type of composite. Some tennis rackets and golf clubs are made of graphite composites.

Damage to composite materials often begins as tiny cracks. As they grow, they weaken the material until it breaks.

To heal tiny cracks automatically, the Illinois researchers sprinkled capsules about the thickness of a human hair throughout an experimental fiberglass-like compound.

When a crack appeared, capsules in its path broke open, spilled their contents and sealed the cracks.

The compound retained 75 percent of its original strength after the cracks had healed for 48 hours, the researchers reported.

The study was published in Thursday's issue of the journal Nature.

The new material "nips the damage in the bud," Richard P. Wool, a University of Delaware researcher, said in an accompanying commentary.

The material is not yet ready for commercial production, however.

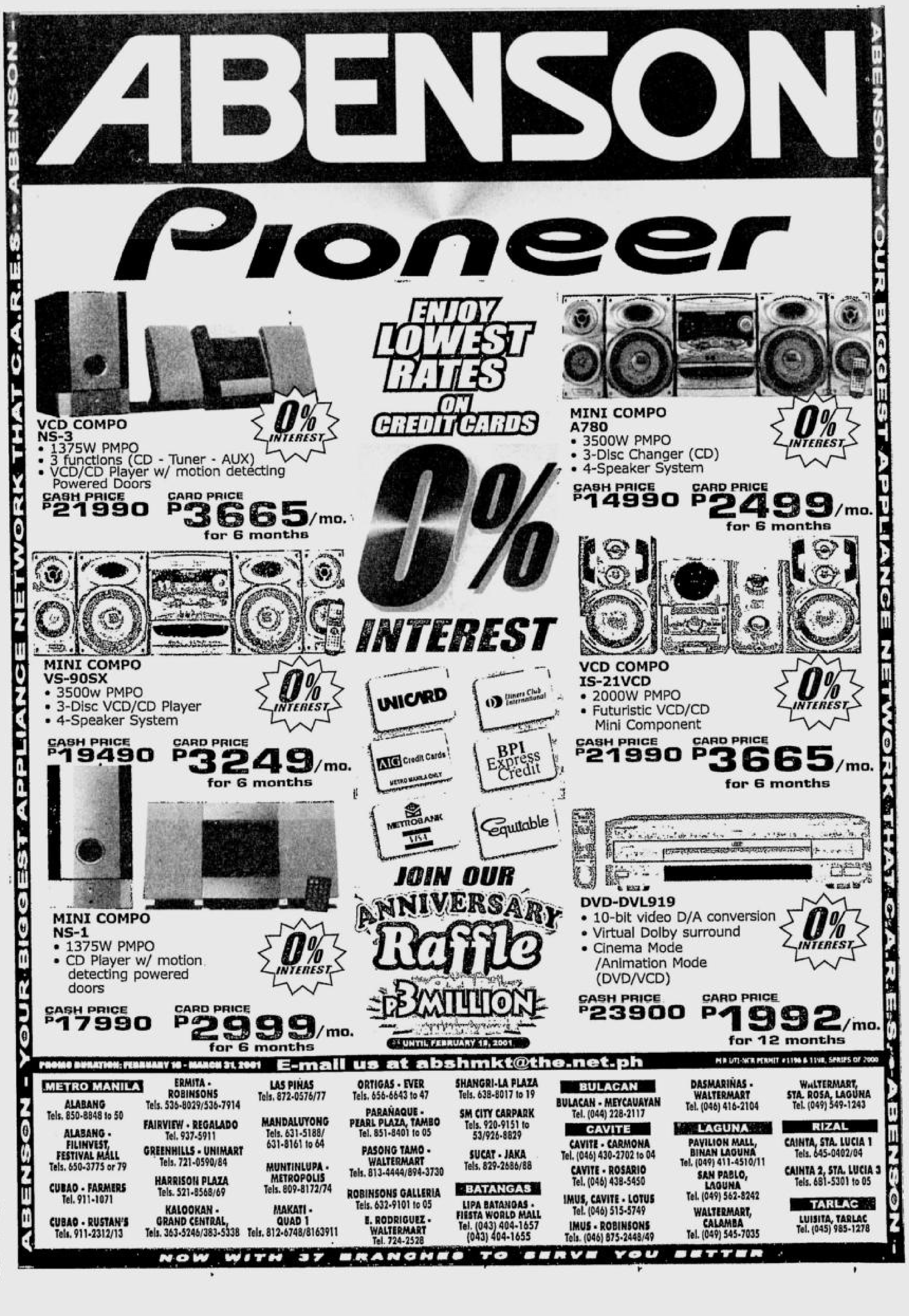
High temperatures stop the setting agent from working, and the curing time is too long for many applications.

While all of the capsules will eventually break, objects made with the material could last several times longer than those made of current composites, according to Wool.

Materials such as the self-healing composite are part of the infant field of smart materials.

Objects such as spacecraft, artificial joints and bridge supports, which are difficult or impossible to reach, are prime candidates for self-healing materials.

White said researchers were also exploring the use of the material for computer circuit boards, many of which come off the production line with small cracks that make them unusable. ***AP***



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Wong, Espiritu finish 1-3

TANAH RATA, Genting Highlands—Former Marlboro Tour champions Wong Kam Po and Victor Espiritu finished 1-3 in the Asian field to catapult the Telekom All-Stars to the lead after the eighth stage of the Le Tour de Langkawi yesterday. Wong, the 1997 Philippine tour champ who made history by becoming the first, and so far the only Asian, to have won a stage here, showed the way in the Asian field with a 3:552:28 clocking.

SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor ■ EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

King plans 'heavy' fight in China

NEW YORK—Don King, who modestly compares his 30-year journey through boxing with Mao Tse-tung's Long March, plans to promote the first heavyweight title fight in China. "Mao really taught me how to survive in this jungle," King said Wednesday in announcing a match in Beijing featuring the winner of Evander Holyfield's WBA title defense against John Ruiz on March 3 at Las Vegas. An opponent will be named later. The tentative date is June 30. *AP*

SUPER SATURDAY

Shark, Welcoat gird for Game 7

BY DENNIS U. EROA

PBL Commissioner Chino Trinidad yesterday said that all signs point to a Super Saturday as titleholder Welcoat Paints and title-hungry Shark Energy Drink dispute the PBL Challenge Cup championship at the Makati Coliseum.

"Both teams are well-rested. I'm sure they will come out smoking. The protagonists need a rest because the series is quite exciting," Trinidad told the INQUIRER.

Trinidad addedd he also decided to hold the deciding Game 7 between the Paintmasters and the Power Boosters tomorrow in order to give fans the chance to experience " the game of a lifetime."

This will be the first time since the PBL used the best-of-seven format that the series reached seven games. Welcoat blanked Shark, 4-0, in the Chairman's Cup where the best-of-seven was used.

For the first time in years, scalpers are doing a killing in the box-office. The INQUIRER learned that scalpers are selling much-coveted lower box tickets at P150 each or five times their face value. Upper box tickets costing P20 can be bought for P100.

"Beware of the scalpers," warned PBL Chair Dioceldo Sy. "But then this is the mother of all games."

Trinidad assured that the best referees will officiate the winner-take-all match. "We'll break down the officiating from games One to Six. And we'll decide who are going to make the calls."

Fans of the Paintmasters and the Power Boosters are coming in full force right from the start of the series. Complete with brass bands and cheerleaders, the PBL has become one colorful fiesta.

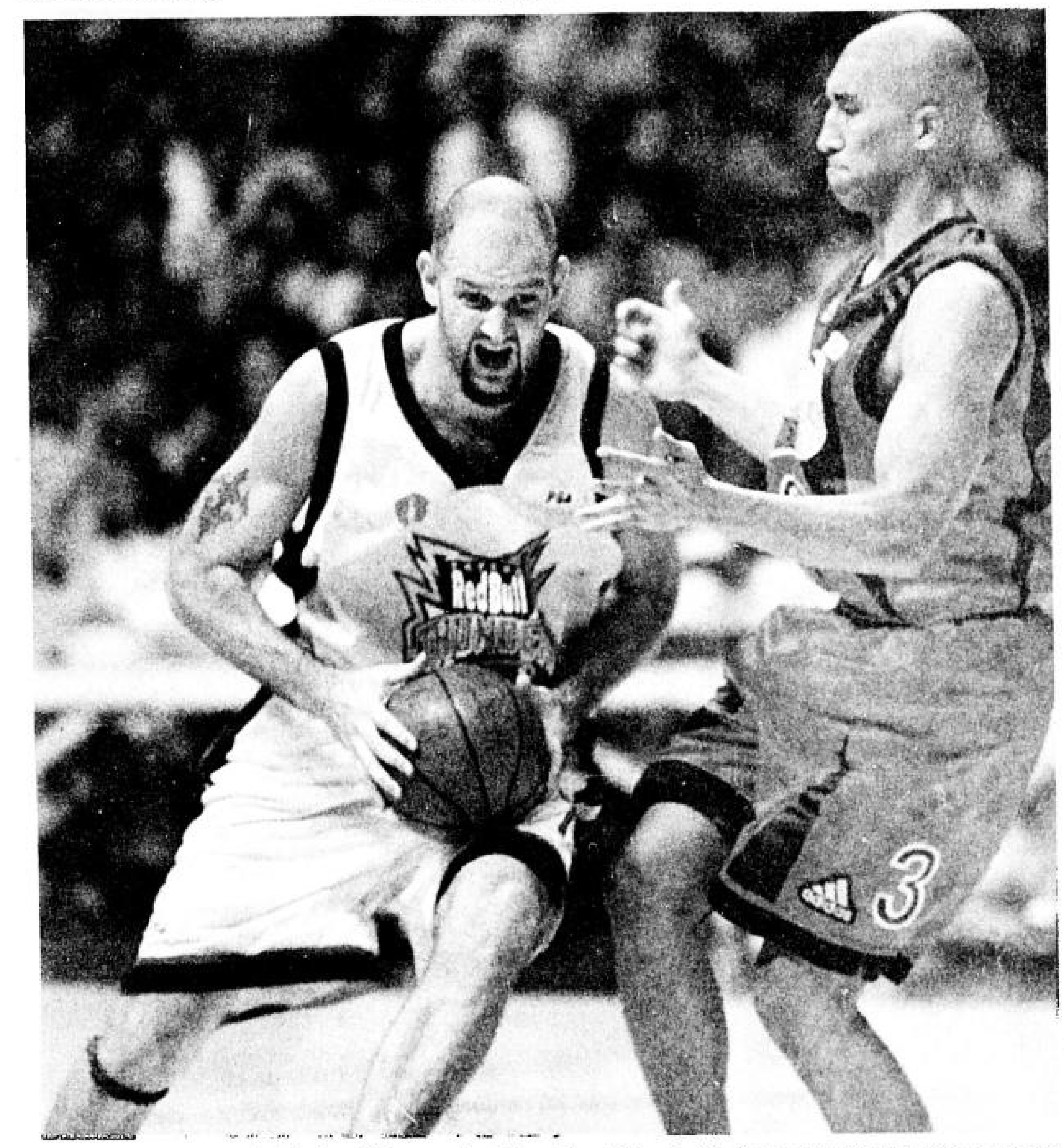
To add spice, Rico J. Puno will belt out a song during the halftime. Lucky fans will also have the chance to win P50,000.00 in Shark's halftime shootout. The PBA finals MVP will also be known after the game.

Meanwhile, Tiny Literal said the BAP filed a case against the Philippine Olympic Committee as a last resort.

Literal was reacting to the threat of POC president Celso Dayrit to suspend the basketball body.

In a press statement, Literal said the board which elected him as president, felt betrayed when the POC decided to recognize Freddie Jalasco as president.

By dragging the POC to court, the country faces the possibility of not being able to defend its SEA Games title in Kuala Lumpur.



RED Bull's Mick Pennisi (left), driving against San Miguel Beer's Nic Belasco in this file photo, will be a vital cog in tonight's game against Alaska Milk.

Red Bull 5, P'foods seek 3rd victories

PBA STANDINGS

	W	L
SMB	3	0
Shell	3	1
Red Bull	2	1
Purefoods	2	1
Ginebra	2	2
Alaska	1	2
Pop Cola	1	2
Mobiline	1	2
Tanduay	1	3
Sta. Lucia	1	3

GAMES TODAY
(Philsports)
5:15 p.m.—Alaska vs Red Bull
7:30 p.m.—Purefoods vs Pop Cola

BY MARC ANTHONY REYES

RED Bull and Purefoods share the same goal when they go against separate rivals in today's PBA All-Filipino Cup double-header: Win their third game to join the leaders in the upper rung of the standings.

But that's the only thing they have in common.

The Thunder are hoping to extend their winning streak against a dangerous team like Alaska Milk, while the Hotdogs are reeling from two successive losses entering their game against Pop Cola.

Red Bull lost its first game to Pop Cola (88-77) but that was because the league's newest team has yet to consolidate its forces and fine tune the heavy adjustment it made in the pre-season.

But the Thunder have since recovered, beating Shell Velocity (76-60) and Mobiline (80-68) via routs, flashing their vaunted arsenal led by Devonn Harp, Mick Pennisi and top draft pick Willie Miller.

"We won because we started out hot in those two games," said Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao. "I don't know how we'll fare if we are the ones trailing from the start."

Well, Guiao can check it out against the Aces, who, despite a two-game losing run, still pack enough firepower, maturity and organization to challenge the Thunder's celebrated youth and dynamism.

On the other hand, the Hotdogs need to fix some things in their system which Shell Velocity exploited during their game in Lipa City.

Purefoods, which won their first two games, suddenly found itself grounded with that loss (77-67) which even the inspired games of Andy Seigle and Noy Castillo can't prevent.

The Hotdogs' intact core will be up against the Panthers' fortified lineup. However, Pop Cola will enter the game nursing a two-game skid despite the high-profile personnel that includes Johnny Abarrientos, Rudy Hatfield, Nelson Asaytono, Poch Juinio and Jojo Lastimosa.

RP boxers start SEAG buildup

BY JUNE NAVARRO

BOXING will have the first crack at an international exposure prior to the Kuala Lumpur Southeast Asian Games as a pool of boxers leaves for China next week to test their mettle in the Fujian Friendship Boxing Championships.

Manny Lopez, president of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines, said the Fujian campaign will kick off the local pugilists' series of tournaments abroad which will be used as the gauge to determine the composition of the national team.

Brunei SEAG silver medalist Junie Tizon, seasoned fighter Sonny Doliente (flyweight), and bantam Roel Laguna will banner the Philippine contingent but Lopez said the list has yet to be finalized as boxing officials ponder on who to send in the weeklong event.

"But definitely we will leave on the 19th. This is the first among eight international tournaments lined up for the boxers," said Lopez, stressing the final lineup will only be determined after the last event before the SEAG in September.

The tournament will run from Feb. 19-28. He will announce members of the RP team today.

"We're preparing as early as possible because we have to make sure that the team we will be sending in Kuala Lumpur is the best squad," said Lopez.

Monitoring the expected improvement of the local boxers are Glicerio "Boy" Catolico and Orlan Tacuyan, who will serve as coaches.

The Philippine Sports Commission released $3,000 for the boxers' allowances but Lopez said in a statement that the trip should not be categorized as the agency's "one trip per NSA" policy.

PAL Interclub draws record 126 teams in 'Balik-Cebu' tilt

A RECORD-SMASHING field of 71 men's clubs and 55 seniors teams marks the sentimental return of the Philippine Airlines Interclub golf tournament to Cebu for the 54th staging of the country's acknowledged national team championship.

The annual golfing fiesta is spread over a period of nine days on what used to be the event's traditional venues—the Cebu Country Club and the Club Filipino de Cebu—to accommodate the unprecedented number of participating clubs.

Major sponsors for this year are Airbus Industries, GE Aircraft Engines, Mareco Broadcasting Corp. (105.1 Crossover), National Broadcasting Corp., TTG Asia and ABS-CBN International.

Corporate sponsors include Asia Brewery, Pathfinder Holdings Phils., Boeing, Bombo Radyo, DWWW, Foreign Post, Fortune Tobacco Corp., Malaya, Philstar Daily, Premier Wines and Spirits, Radio Mindanao Network, University of Mindanao Broadcasting Network, Waterfront Hotel, Zebra Holdings, PLDT, Century Park Hotel, El Nido Beach Resort, Heritage Hotel, U-Bix Corp., Verdemar Golf and Country Club, and RGMA Network Inc.

The 15th Seniors Interclub will be played over three days for the first time—from Feb. 22 to 24.

After a two-day break, including practice, the 54th regular men's Interclub will be played over four days, from Feb. 27 to March 2 on the same venues.

Hitting the ceremonial tee will be two of the country's premier golfers, Athlete of the Year 2000 Dorothy Joy Delasin and many-time Philippine Golf Circuit winner Felix "Cassius" Casas.

Both events were either born or nurtured in Cebu, which was the permanent home of the Interclub was born 54 years ago in Manila and Club Filipino de Cebu hosted the second staging at its old course.

Club Filipino hosted the inaugural staging of the Seniors Interclub in 1987.

It will be the first time that the event will be played in Cebu after 12 years. After the 1989 event and after the nearby Magellan Hotel burned down, the old Club Filipino course was torn up to give way to what is now the Cebu Business Park.

The event then shuttled between Bacolod and Davao, two cities that offered excellent venues and facilities to accommodate the growing number of competitors.

That was until last year, when the Interclub moved to Northern Mindanao for the first time with the modern Pueblo de Oro and Country Club in Cagayan de Oro City and the vintage Del Monte golf and Country Club in Bukidnon hosting the two events.

Canlubang captured the Men's title while Luisita took the Seniors championship.

Cebu, as the historic roots of the event, had made a gallant bid to host the 50th Interclub four years ago but lost out in the bidding to Bacolod, which held the distinction as host of the Golden Anniversary of the Interclub.

But with Club Filipino's new layout in Danao City reaching maturity, Cebu could not be denied this time. Aptly, the theme for this year's event is "Balik Cebu."

This year's field will be the largest ever, surpassing last year's roster of 59 men's and 48 seniors clubs.

Also, a record this year is the number of foreign-based participants—32—mostly coming from San Francisco and Los Angeles.

The other foreign-based clubs will come from Sydney, Tokyo, Guam, Seattle, Pittsburgh, Honolulu, Vancouver, Dhahran and Riyadh in Saudi Arabia, Singapore, and Xiamen.

DEFYING THE ODDS

Woman, 82, sinks 2 aces

POMPANO BEACH, Florida—Eat your heart out, Tiger Woods.

Evelyn Tucci, an 82-year-old woman who usually shoots in the low 100s, sank two holes-in-one during one round of golf.

"I prayed that before I died I'd get a hole in one," Tucci said.

Her wishes were answered twofold Tuesday at the Crystal Lake Country Club when Tucci, a 32-handicap, joined friend Carin West in a best-ball member/guest tournament.

Tucci used a 4-wood to ace the par-3, 112-yards (101-meter), No. 2 hole to get things going.

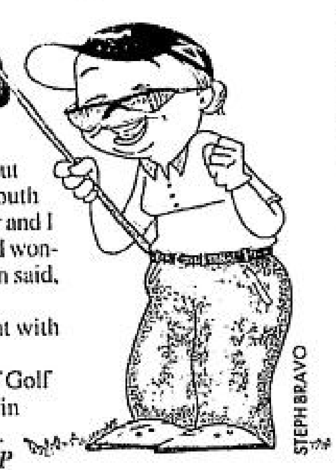
"I wouldn't believe it 'til I saw it," Tucci said. "Then one of the other players shouted to me, 'Evelyn, come over here and see. It's in the cup.'"

Noticing the wind was blowing hard, Tucci lined up at the par-3, 157-yard (143-meter) fifth hole and swung her driver. And sank her second ace of the day.

"I saw it heading toward the green, but I never imagined," Tucci told the South Florida Sun-Sentinel. "We walked over and I was looking at two balls on the green and wondering which one was mine, when Carin said, 'It's in the cup.'"

Tucci and West won the tournament with a handicapped score of 55.

According to a March 2000 issue of Golf Digest, the odds of making two holes in one during one round is 67 million to 1. *AP*



Naga meet tomorrow

THE NAGA City Sports Council Inc. in Bicol is hosting the 2001 Challenge the Champion 1st Bicol Region Amateur Boxing Championships starting tomorrow at the historic Peñafrancia landing arch in Barangay Dinaga Riverside, Naga City.

Council overall chair Pedro C. Lee said the regional boxing meet starts with the opening rites at 4 p.m. with Manny Lopez, president of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines as guest of honor.

Organized by the Naga City Sports Council, the slugfest has the official sanction of the City Government of Naga through City Mayor Cho S. Roco, the Abap and the PSC.

Signing of Memorandum of Agreement
NATIONAL GOLF ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES
and
NGAP

P8-M PHILIPPINE OPEN

MMDA Chair Ben Abalos (seated, extreme left) signs Memorandum of Agreement along with Acting Defense Secretary Eduardo R. Ermita and NGAP president Rod Feliciano making Wack Wack as venue of the Philippine Open Golf championships set for March 29 to April 1. Abalos is president of Wack Wack while Secretary Ermita is NGAP chair. The RP Open, offering P8 million in prizes, will be a joint undertaking of the National Golf Association of the Philippines and Wack Wack. Witnessing the signing are (standing, from left) Jake Ayson, S.P. Malbarosa, George Go, Tony Sisante, Benny Gopez, Vince Villafuerte, Ernesto Lim and Taby Tabaniag. ROMY HOMILLADA

Allen I makes Kobe look silly

76ers tame Lakers, 112-97

PHILADELPHIA —Allen Iverson got a standing ovation for what he did in the All-Star game, then added another accolade—an "M-V-P" chant from the Philadelphia fans—to his wonderful week.

Iverson scored 40 points and made Kobe Bryant look silly on defense Wednesday night in the NBA as the Philadelphia 76ers had their way with the Los Angeles Lakers in a 112-97 victory.

Iverson, who reached 40 points for the second consecutive night and the 11th time this season, relished every chance he had to go one-on-one with Bryant.

Shaquille O'Neal, guarded by backups Nazr Mohammed, Todd MacCulloch and Jumaine Jones in the absence of regular Sixers center Theo Ratliff, out with a fractured wrist, led the Lakers with 29 points.

Bryant added 18 points, seven rebounds and seven assists–along with another stern lecture from coach Phil Jackson when things weren't going well.

Bucks 102, Hawks 98

In Atlanta, Sam Cassell scored 25 points and Ray Allen added 19 as the Milwaukee Bucks went on a 16-0 tear in the final five minutes to beat the Atlanta Hawks.

The Hawks, who lost their seventh in a row, led 94-85 after Jason Terry hit a 20-foot jump shot with 5:13 remaining.

But Milwaukee rallied, and Scott Williams' dunk with 1:08 left made it 96-94, giving the Bucks their first lead since the second quarter.

Terry led the Hawks with 35 points. Atlanta got 22 points and 18 rebounds from Dikembe Mutombo.

Lorenzen Wright scored 21 points and had 15 rebounds for the Hawks, who had only nine players available.

Pistons 105, Nets 86

In Auburn Hills, Michigan, Jerry Stackhouse scored 30 points and Joe Smith added 20 as the Detroit Pistons once again picked on the New Jersey Nets.

The win gave Detroit a 4-0 season sweep of the Nets. The Pistons are 16-31 against the rest of the league.

Stephon Marbury, who scored 50 points in Tuesday night's overtime loss to the Los Angeles Lakers, had just 12 for the Nets.

New Jersey has lost 13 straight games at the Palace. The Nets' last win in Detroit came on Feb. 5, 1994.

Magic 114, Clippers 101

In Orlando, Florida, Darrell Armstrong had 22 points and a career-high 16 assists as the Orlando Magic beat the Los Angeles Clippers for their seventh straight win.

Tracy McGrady added 22 points for Orlando, which improved to three games over .500 (26-23) for the first time since Dec. 23, 1999.

The Clippers, who lost their third straight, were led by Lamar Odom's 15 points. Jeff McInnis and Darius Miles each had 14.

Jazz 106, Knicks 90

In Salt Lake City, Karl Malone scored 33 points and John Starks had 16 against his former team as the Utah Jazz beat the New York Knicks.

John Stockton added 15 points and Donyell Marshall scored 12 and had 10 rebounds as the Jazz beat the Knicks for the seventh straight time.

Malone hit 14-of-16 from the foul line.

Glen Rice came off the bench to lead the Knicks with 24 points, while Latrell Sprewell had 23, Allan Houston had 12 and Marcus Camby 10. New York, saddled with foul problems, couldn't keep up with the Jazz in the fourth quarter.

Suns 104, Timberwolves 96

In Phoenix, Shawn Marion set a career high for the second night in a row with 38 points and Jason Kidd had his sixth triple-double of the season as the Phoenix Suns beat the Minnesota Timberwolves.

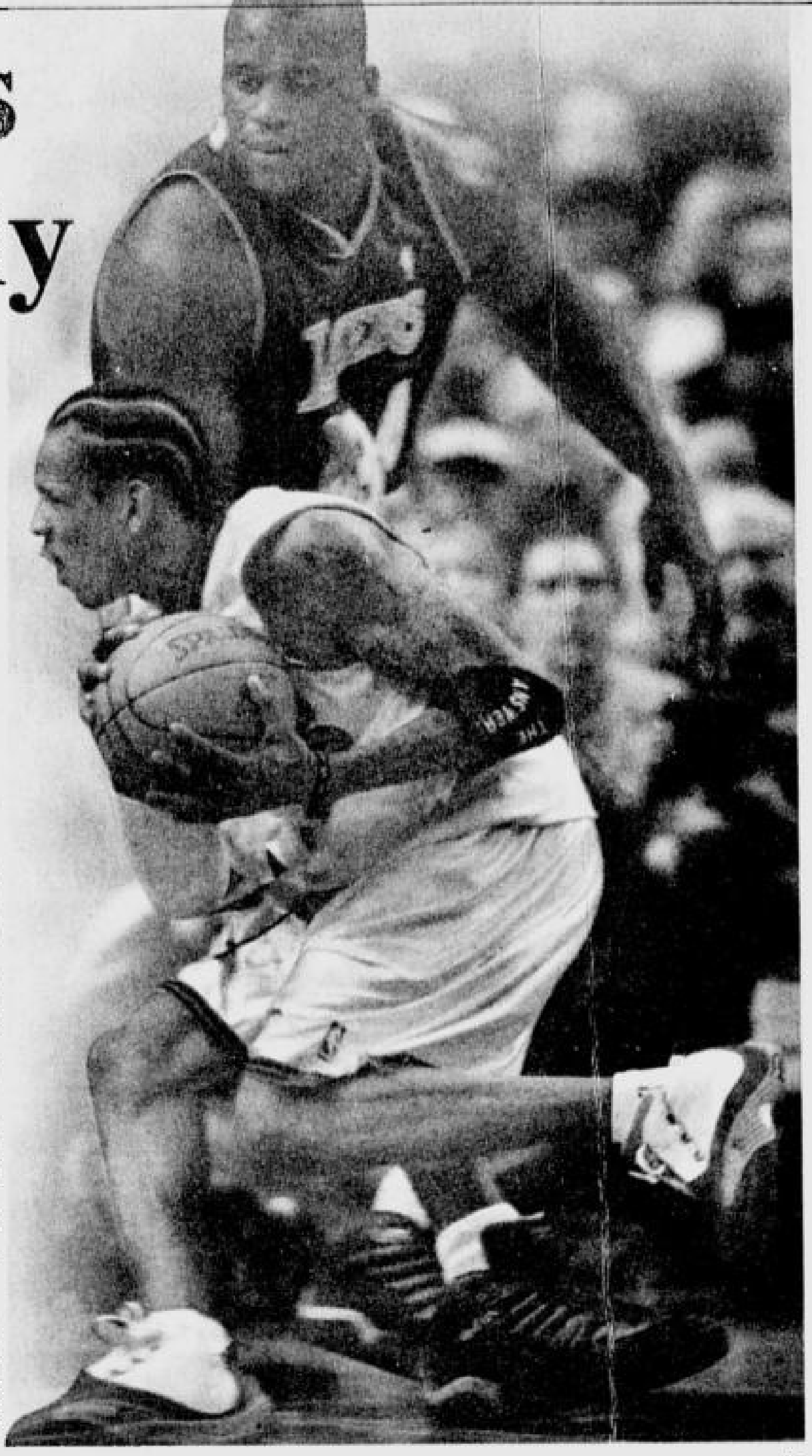
Complete results:

Milwaukee 102, Atlanta 98; Detroit 105, New Jersey 86; Orlando 114, L.A. Clippers 101; Philadelphia 112, L.A. Lakers 97; Phoenix 104, Minnesota 96; Utah 106, New York 90. *AP*

NBA fines Versace $10,000

NEW YORK — Vancouver Grizzlies president Dick Versace was fined $ 10,000 by the National Basketball Association on Wednesday for remarks about the Toronto Raptors in a radio interview.

In the Tuesday interview, Versace said the state of basketball in Canada is no better in Toronto than it is in Vancouver, where the Grizzlies have been given permission by commissioner David Stern to look at relocating. *AP*



IVERSON scoots past O'Neal. AP

Araneta hosts NCA derby Feb. 19-21

BIG-TIME fights mark the resumption of the National Cockers Association 7-Cock Derby at the world-class Araneta Coliseum on Feb. 19-21.

Featuring the very best fighting cocks of the country's leading breeder-cockers, the derby will be hosted by Pampanga's Jun and Rudy Jingco, the Madlambayan brothers, Jojo Binny and Ferdie and Tanggol Eusebio. It will kick off with the three-cock elimination matches on Monday, Feb. 19, ending with the four-cock finals on Wednesday, Feb. 21.

Heading the field are this season's NCA seven-cock derby champions Jessie Viceo, the Alan Tan-Patrick Puno combine, Big Dome owner Nene Araneta, Gerry Fevidal, Ruel Ricafort and E. Santos. Also in the fold are Danding Cojuangco, James Chiongbian, NCA president Ito Yñares, Jun Santiago noted breeders Boy Jiao and Jun Cometa, Alex and Gerry Escalona, Georgie Antonio, Eddie Araneta, engineer Pacifico Berin, Rudy Albano, Gov. Raul Molintas, Robert So;

Eddie and Bomboy Araneta, Roel Feliciano and Sons, Tos Reyes, John Capinpin, Romy Pamatmat, Romy Panganiban, Jun Velasco, Manny Co, Peping and Esting Teopaco, Jojo Binny and Tanggol Eusebio, Blandy Tolentino, Boyboy Roa, Pepito Ngo, Boy Diaz, Al Velez and Boy Velez, Boy Lechon, Pol Estrellado, Erning Zubia, Paul Dy, William Co, Dicky Lim, Gerry Fevidal, Sonny Lagon, Rolly Ligon, Ramon Mansanares and Nilo Boy Lizares, to name a few.

Meanwhile, the fifth of 15 regular NCA 7-Cock Derbies will be held on Feb. 26-28 with Gerry Fevidal, Ruel Ricafort and Alex Escalona as hosts.

Kournikova virus hacker arrested

AMSTERDAM, Netherlands — Dutch police arrested a computer hacker Wednesday who claimed he wrote the Anna Kournikova computer virus that snarled e-mail around the world this week, officials said.

KOURNIKOVA

The 20-year-old from the northern province of Friesland turned himself in and was arrested, police spokesman Robert Rambonnet told The Associated Press. He was detained on suspicion of damaging computer programs and property.

His identity was withheld under Dutch privacy laws.

Rambonnet said the maximum penalty for damaging property is four years in jail.

The Anna Kournikova virus backed up e-mail systems and hundreds of thousands of computers from Australia to the United States.

The virus was traced by the Excite(at)Home computer network to a Dutch subscriber. Dutch police initially said they had no reason to investigate it.

On Tuesday, a person identifying himself as OnTheFLy claimed responsibility on an Internet site for writing and spreading the virus, saying it was meant as a warning to Internet users to tighten security.

"I admit writing the virus," the Feb. 13 letter read.

"I never wanted to harm the people (who) open the attachment. But after all it's their own fault they got infected," it said.

The virus arrives as an e-mail attachment named "AnnaKournikova.jpg.vbs" and carries the message "Hi: Check This!" It promises to deliver a picture of the teen-age tennis star, but does not actually contain a photo.

When the user clicks on the attachment, the virus is released, worming its way into address books and sending itself to everyone on the list, clogging e-mail servers.

The outbreak was largely contained by Tuesday. The virus failed to infect as many computers in Asia as it did in Europe and the United States.

In Marseille, France, top-seed Magnus Norman moved into the second round of the $ 500,000 Marseille Open tennis tournament on Wednesday by beating Belgian Davis Cup player Olivier Rochus.

Norman won 7-6 (8), 7-5 to set up an intriguing second-round clash with Max Mirnyi of Belarus.

In Doha, Qatar, second-seed Mary Pierce of France was knocked out of the $170,000 Qatar Open on Wednesday, losing to a little-known Czech player ranked No. 77 in the world.

Adriana Gersi won 6-4, 5-7, 6-0 in 90 minutes.

In Nice, France, top seed Venus Williams of the United States was stretched to two tie-breaks before beating Frenchwoman Anne-Gaelle Sidot 7-6(3), 7-6(6) Wednesday in the second round of the Terazura WTA Tour tennis open.

Williams, the world number three, took one hour and 49 minutes to overcome the unseeded Sidot. *AP*

3 rule Roligon tourney

THREE entries out of 358 remained unscathed to share the championship of the just concluded Roligon Mega Cockpit 11th Anniversary 7-Cock Derby.

Finishing with perfect scores of seven wins in as many matches were entries Lucban farm of Pepe Flores supported by lawyer Cito Esquivias of Marikina City, Pasay Feb. 23 4-Cock of Robert So handled by ace trainer Muroy Dolorico and Nonoy & Sunny of balikbayan breeder Toto Lim backed up by Joseph Aaron Miravalles.

Lim, who hails from Silay City, fought Gavilan Hatch roosters from Johhny Stancel of Dallas, Texas. Bordik Jarino did the handling and conditioning.

Bagging solo runner-up with 6.5 points were lawyer Rudy Salud and Danilo Hinlo with their entry Winning Time DVH.

Bert Arizobal (Junjun BA Farm) and lawyer Jun Mendoza (Counter Strike) came short of entering the winners' circle after losing their last fights thereby scoring only six points.

Meanwhile, another marathon derby looms on Saturday with the opening of the biggest and richest 4-cock derby ever, the Super Karambola 2001.

Ref jailed for attacking coach

ATLANTA —A youth basketball referee, apparently angry that his calls had been criticized, slashed a coach with a knife after a game between 7- and 8-year-olds, sending youngsters and parents scurrying in fear, authorities say.

Coach Jerry Sweeney needed 17 stitches and referee Oliver Wood was jailed on charges of aggravated assault after the attack Tuesday night at an elementary school gym in Fayetteville, an Atlanta suburb.

Sweeney, 48, told police that Wood, a 46-year-old retiree, grabbed him by the throat and cut his arm, leaving an 8-centimeter (3-inch) gash. Sweeney said he had stepped in the referee's way as Wood lunged for another coach.

Setting the record straight

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

RIZAL Rep. Gilberto Duavit, principal author of the sports incentives bill, flatly denied claims that there was discrimination in the landmark measure, saying that the emphasis to reward the athletes was based on fairness and equality without discrimination of any kind toward their achievements.

Recalling one House committee hearing, Duavit said he even proposed an amendment that would recognize the past exploits of sports heroes such as Efren "Bata" Reyes, Dorothy Delasin, Paeng Nepomuceno, Lita de la Rosa and Bong Coo, who are champions of non-Olympic events like billiards, golf and bowling.

"World level achievements in non-Olympic sports were to be treated equally with the Olympics having in mind that it is not the fault of the athletes that their sport is not included in the Olympic calendar and that their efforts and achievements are no less." Duavit, who once served in the defunct Ministry of Youth and Sports Development, also said annual, biennial and quadrennial competitions would have also been treated equally without distinction.

"However, for whatever reason or miscommunication, the reconciled bill does not recognize the achievements of Paeng Nepomuceno in the annual Bowling World Cup, the achievements of Efren "Bata" Reyes (in billiards); and that of Dorothy Delasin (in golf) because they were achieved in annual competitions which are typical in individual events of non-Olympic sports and not quadrennial competitions like the Olympic or Asian Games."

Still, Duavit stressed that he was 100 percent behind the recognition of all athletes who have been instrumental in bringing honors to the Philippines, including Nepomuceno, Bata Reyes and Delasin who did the remarkable feats without government expense. "I am sure the next Congress will take the necessary steps to benefit sports in general and the athletes in particular."

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REJOINDER. Everything is going well with the "godfather" program jointly initiated by former Secretary Richard Gomez and Philippine Olympic Committee president Celso Dayrit, according to POC media officer Gus Villanueva. "As a matter of fact, Gomez and Dayrit have continued seeking more "godfathers" to help more NSAs. There appeared to be a lull in the program during the latter part of 2000 because the economy suffered as a result of the impeachment trial."

So far, the POC explained, the "godfathers" who continue to give their support are Rico Cavestany of Caltex for boxing, Jose Syjuco of Petron (taekwondo), George Yang of McDonald's (archery), former Speaker Manny Villar (billiards), ABS-CBN president Gabby Lopez (fencing), SM executive Hans Sy (ice skating) and CAP executive Marc Thomson (swimming). Cesar Quiambao of Skyway is still waiting for pencak silat president Sultan Kiram III to submit his program and his needs.

***

SPORTS TRIVIA. Born in 1962 in East St. Louis, Illinois, Jacqueline Joyner-Kersee was named after the then President John Kennedy's lovely wife. A two-time Olympic champion and world-record holder in the heptathlon, Jackie won the gold medals in Seoul in 1988 and in Barcelona in 1992. She missed a third gold in Atlanta in 1996 due to a sore hamstring that, over the ninth barrier of the opening 100-meter hurdles, started to trouble her. She finished in pain and eventually withdrew, leaving the gold to Syria's Ghada Shouaa, who would have been a worthy rival even if Jackie had been in perfect shape.

SPORTS ON TV

COMPILED BY LORENZO MANGUIAT

ESPY AWARDS: ESPY Awards at midnight on ESPN

BASKETBALL: US NCAA - Wisconsin Badgers vs Illinois Fighting Illini at 8 a.m. (r), Cincinnati Bearcats vs Memphis Tigers at 10 a.m., Florida Gators vs LSU Tigers at 1 p.m. (delayed) on ESPN

NBA - Miami Heat vs Toronto Raptors at 9 a.m. (r- 9 p.m.) on Star Sports

NBA Inside Stuff at 8:30 p.m. on Star Sports

GOLF: PGA AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am Tour Highlights at 8 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

Inside the PGA Tour at 12:30 p.m. (r- 8 p.m.) on Star Sports

PGA Buick Invitational, Day One at 11:30 p.m. (delayed) on Star Sports

HOCKEY: NHL Power Week! at 4 p.m. on ESPN

SWIMMING: World Cup (Paris) Highlights at 1 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

SOCCER: Western Union World Football at 7 p.m. on ESPN

Asian Football Show at 7 p.m. on Star Sports

Spanish League Highlights at 7:30 p.m. on ESPN

UEFA Champions League - Arsenal FC vs Olympique Lyonnais at 8 p.m. and Spartak Moscow vs Bayern Munich at 10 p.m. on ESPN

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

RACING TIPS

AT SAN LAZARO
BY MR. 999

Race 1—1. Scholar Girl 2. The Topnotcher 3. Heavenly Wings

Race 2—1. Justsaywhenjen 2. Always 3. Lucky Swing 4. Solitaire

Race 3—1. No Regrets 2. Turbo Carera 3. Leverage Buyer 4. Go Johnny Go

Race 4—1. Time and Again 2. James Joy 3. Expediter

Race 5—1. Shining Jo 2. Jazz Queen 3. Cobra Door

Race 6—1. Baby My Beloved 2. Merry Melody 3. Black Ijhay

Race 7—1. Sir Olizon 2. Padron Real 3. Don Benito 4. Sea Eagle

Race 8—1. Royal Worship 2. Naic Warrior 3. Foreign Exchange

Race 9—1. Extra Strength 2. Noble Spirit 3. Wings of Gold 4. Touch of Luck

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Cowboy Grill 1190 ARQUIZA ST., MALATE — NON-TOXIC PUZZLES/BROWNIE — NO ENTRANCE FEE 525.1474/525.4269
Cowboy Grill 431 REMEDIOS ST., MALATE — STREETLIFE KNIGHTS — NO ENTRANCE FEE ☎521.8143
Cowboy Grill NOVALICHES, Q.C. — HIMIG THINKERS W/ JOEGRAD — NO ENTRANCE FEE ☎453.4329
Hanna's GARDEN & GRILL 525 P. FAURA ST. ERMITA — 1st BORN CHILD SYMPOSIUM — NO ENTRANCE FEE 523.3788/524.7655
Jazz Kitchen YALE cor AURORA, CUBAO — SOUL COOL NOTY NOTES — P 50 ENTRANCE FEE ☎913. 7202
KAMPO 2086 #47 WEST AVENUE Q.C. — PAROKYA NI EDGAR 7TH SOUL/A'PETITE — P 250 CONSUMABLE ☎373.7181/83
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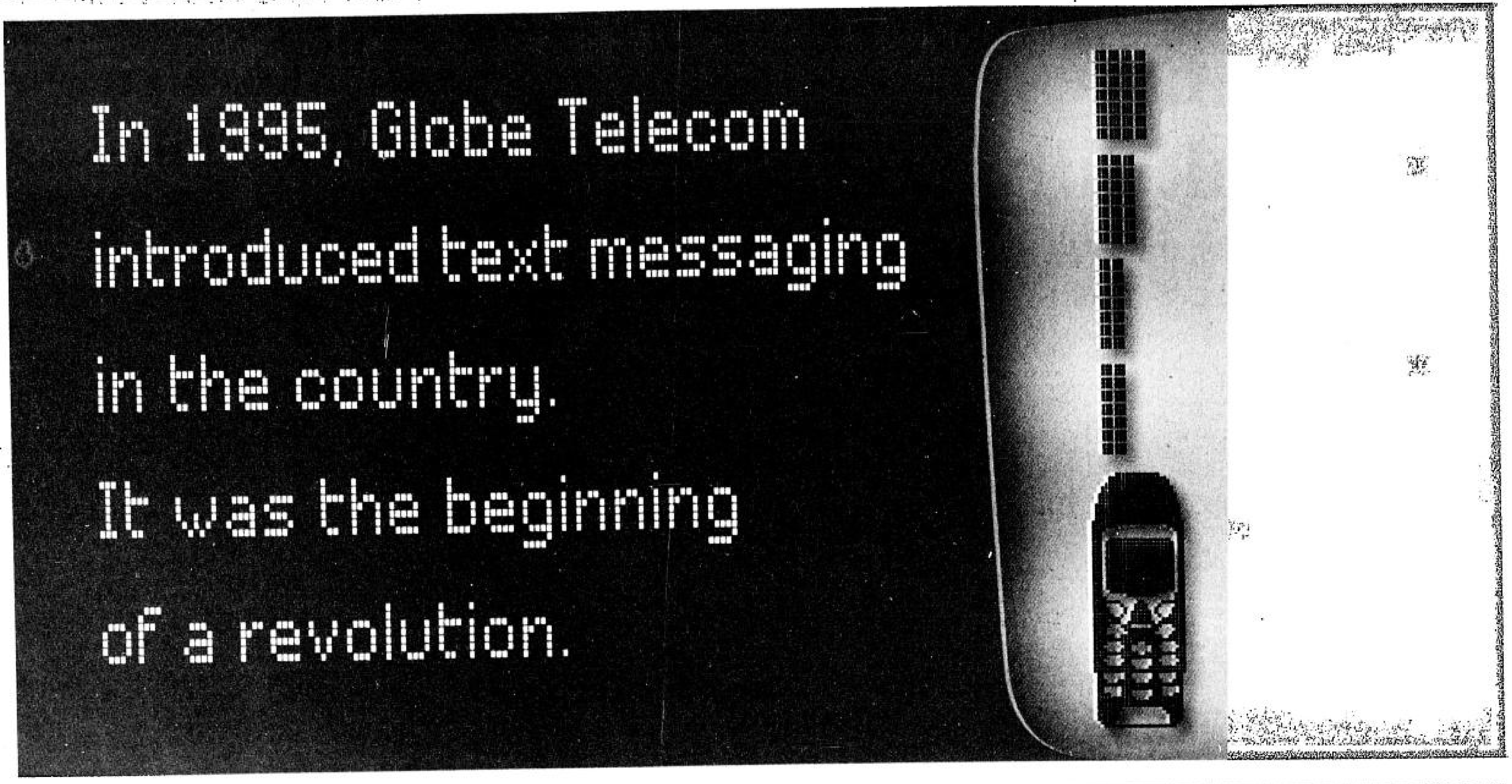

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I didn't touch caddie–Candazo A25

METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

1 killed in Universal Robina Corp. robbery A25

Oreta daughter to run in Malabon-Navotas

Against Rep. Sandoval

BY CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

LAWYER Rissa Oreta, the eldest daughter of "dancing" Sen. Tessie Aquino-Oreta, would be following in her mother's footsteps as she is said to be running for congressman in the Malabon-Navotas district in the May elections.

But she could also trip along the way if she comes up against Rep. Ricky Sandoval, who warned the young Oreta yesterday that she would face "tremendous criticisms" because of her mother's "negative" public image.

Sen. Aquino-Oreta is a known supporter of deposed President Estrada. Sandoval, a member of the "Spice Boys" at the House of Representatives, is a staunch Estrada critic.

Even if the Oreta family is said to be still undecided on whom among its members should take the next shot at the congressional seat, posters of the young Oreta are already all over Malabon.

Apolinar Adriano, the chief of staff of the young Oreta, predicted a sure win for the young woman, whom he described to be soft-spoken but with a will to get things done.

Should the young Oreta run, she would likely make her bid for the congressional seat under the banner of the Nationalist People's Coalition, Adriano said.

But he also admitted that the Oreta family is still choosing between Rissa and her uncle Tito to pit against Sandoval, who won against the latter in the 1998 elections by about 2,000 votes.

"Rissa has a lot of programs for Malabon," Adriano said. "Should she decide to run, she would likely concentrate on the problems of flood, drugs, and put up free legal assistance to the needy."

Sandoval's warning that the young Oreta should brace herself against criticism apparently stems from her mother's pro-Estrada stand.

Public perception of Senator Oreta worsened after she voted along with 10 other senators against the opening of a second envelope supposedly containing damning evidence against Estrada during his impeachment trial at the Senate.

The senator's standing sank to its lowest after a television camera caught her doing a jig on the last day of the impeachment trial and earned for her the disparaging title "Dancing Queen."

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I didn't touch caddie-Candazo

MARIKINA City Rep. Romeo Candazo yesterday denied that charges had been filed against him for allegedly beating up a female caddie at the Forest Hills Gold and Country Club in Antipolo City last Thursday.

But he said he welcomed the filing of charges for serious physical injuries by caddie Perla Benolirao against Suzette Lopez so he could refute the accusations against him.

Lopez was identified as Candazo's girlfriend in news reports, but he claimed he met her for the first time that day.

"Contrary to published reports, nowhere in Benolirao's complaint did the woman caddie accuse me of strangulating or beating her," he said in a statement. "Which is why I cannot understand how I came to maltreat the caddie as per news reports."

He said Lopez came to the golf course with engineer Ruben Figueroa who invited him to play golf at Forest Hills. He said Figueroa, a contractor close to incumbent Marikina City officials, also brought along a certain Jojo Simon.

The lawmaker said that in the middle of their game, he saw from afar that Lopez and Benolirao were apparently arguing.

Candazo recently announced he would run for mayor of Marikina City. He is one of at least four candidates said to be running for mayor of the city. But a recent Social Weather Stations survey named him as the most likely to win the race.

Makati groups take Edu's side

By Leah Salterio

BARANGAY-BASED non-government organizations (NGOs) and Makati youth groups yesterday denounced the claims made by barangay leaders that Makati Vice Mayor Edu Manzano has not been visible in the city.

When families lost their homes in a fire in Barangay Cembo in Fort Bonifacio last month, Manzano distributed relief goods, said Wilma Capoquian, leader of the Kaibigan Kabalikat sa Kaunlaran (Kakasa Ka).

Some barangay leaders criticized Manzano after he claimed, in an Inquirer interview published last Monday, that he has visited every nook and cranny of Makati.

"What these barangay leaders aired were their own opinions and they did not reflect the real sentiments of Makati residents," said Rolando Torrente, Batang Bonifacio Movement (BBM) president.

Torrente, a resident of Barangay Rizal in Pembo, also said Manzano donated relief goods in times of disasters and during public consultations at civic welfare movements around the city since 1998.

Manzano is the administration party candidate that will be pitted against former Metro Manila Development Authority chair Jejomar Binay. Binay's wife, Dr. Elenita Binay, is the current mayor of Makati.

Meanwhile, East Rembo barangay chair Romanito Verecio alleged that Manzano's camp conducted a survey which revealed that Jojo Binay leads in the mayoral race with 82 percent, versus 5 percent for Manzano.

Verecio said Manzano could never win the respect of Makati residents because he has no performance to speak of.

"*Puro porma*, that's all he will ever be good at," he said.

Death in the family

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

LYDIA de Vega's son was crushed and killed by a straying passenger jeepney on Tuesday morning. John Michael de Vega Mercado, 4, died on the spot. His brains got splattered on the pavement.

Until yesterday, Lydia was still trying hard to untangle the savage mystery behind her son's death.

The Asian sprint legend, pretty and primed to run away with a beauty title, said John Michael, now lying in a gleaming white casket, suddenly started talking strangely on Sunday. The peppery kid turned restless, Lydia said, and kept asking her how she would feel if he died.

Would she feel sad? "*Malulungkot ba raw ako 'pag namatay siya?*"

But, of course, Lydia remembered answering.

But, in the same breath, Lydia said she promptly told the boy to hush up and stop talking like that.

In the first place: why would an innocent 4-year-old suddenly start talking and inquiring about death?

But will you feel sad when I'm gone? John Michael insisted. *Malulungkot ka ba kung wala ako? Mahal mo ba ako?*

Yes, Lydia reassured, she would feel sad because she loved him very, very much.

But why did she have to scold him, the boy asked next. *Bakit mo ako pinagagalitan*? Bad boy *ba ako?*

No, Lydia answered, because I'm a bad girl.

***

That strange inquiry was conducted last Sunday.

That evening, Lydia said John Michael stuck unusually close to her after dinner. The boy started kissing her on the chin and arms. She remembered moving away but the kid closed in and just kept pecking at her like a bird.

It was quite unusual, the kid had never behaved like that, the mother said.

Just the same, Lydia brushed off everything as the result of the skin flicks John Michael could've had seen on television.

That was not all, though. On Monday, the day before the fatal accident that took place right outside their front yard in Project 4, Quezon City, Lydia said John Michael cried and insisted on going with his papa, engineer Paolo Mercado, to the office.

He just would not let Paolo leave, Lydia said. The boy pressed close to the father and asked to be taken along. It was the first time he had behaved that way.

***

Tuesday morning, Lydia said she turned her back on the kid to boil fresh corn in the husk.

It was just like any ordinary sunny day. Everything looked and felt safe.

Even owner-driven cars seldom plied the lazy street. It was way out of the route of wild, rushing passenger jeepneys.

The area was quite safe, Lydia explained, neighborhood kids all day long were using it as playground.

Anyway, a little after 8 a.m., before she could finish cooking, Lydia heard a commotion. There were cries and shrieks as though a fire had broken out in the neighborhood.

Lydia rushed out—and was horrified by the savage sight of John Michael sprawled like a limp frog on the asphalt road.

Lydia shouted and cried. She turned hysterical. She wanted to touch and hug the boy, all too near there before her, but she said she couldn't touch him.

At first impulse, she said she prayed and offered to give either a leg or an arm of her son, for as long he could live.

In fact, she was willing to give up everything, all the fame, honors, the many medals that deck a whole wide wall of their living room.

Right there and then, though, Lydia said she knew John Michael was already gone.

He was no longer mine, Lydia sobbed quietly yesterday. *Alam ko hindi na siya sa akin.*

The jeepney driver, as can be expected, is in jail.

***

John Michael, an early riser, would always be there ahead of everybody to start the family car, said the subdued, bereaved father.

Paolo tried to paint a picture of a rare, gifted cat, a pedigreed species.

John Michael was only 4, Paolo said, but he was looked up to as the leader by kids older than he was. He was solid, tough and quick. The father hinted that his wasted son would've been one good athlete.

It was actually their second straight tragedy, the father explained, because they also nearly lost their youngest son, Jonathan, whose appendix was ruptured last October.

Jonathan, 1, was hospitalized Oct. 3. But the kid recovered miraculously from blood poisoning and was declared out of danger on Oct. 31.

It was the day John Michael turned 4.

The coincidence was quite unnerving, said the father. Did John Michael have to go in order for them to keep their youngest boy, Paolo wondered out loud yesterday.

Yes, the tragedy was the sort you would not wish even on your enemies.

But, as could be expected, there were those who wanted to know how the couple felt.

Lydia, eyes moist and sore, said she has accepted everything and offered John Michael to the Lord.

Paolo, devastated, said he plans to retire from his job.

He said he also wanted to move out of their place in Proj. 4, where he had spent most of his life.

It's all too sad here, he was mumbling yesterday.

He wanted to reside in a place in Metro Manila where playful, promising kids don't run the risk of being crushed to death. Do you know of such a place?

Japan-bound woman caught with 775 grams of shabu

A WOMAN bound for Japan was caught with 775 grams of shabu hidden in the heels of her shoes Wednesday afternoon at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Abdulmaib Harazoraida Dimaporo, 42, of Mandaluyong City, yielded three packs of shabu or methamphetamine hydrochloride before she could board her Philippine Airlines flight to Narita, airport authorities said.

They said the packs of shabu were stuffed inside the 4-inch heels of the woman's shoes.

She was charged at the Pasay City prosecutor's office with violation of the Dangerous Drugs Act. Mere possession of 200 grams of shabu is punishable by death.

TJ Burgonio

'Frustrated' man beats up commuter

A COMMUTER who was only waiting for his wife along Quezon Avenue in Quezon City was allegedly beaten up by a man who allegedly got frustrated looking for prostituted women.

Remigio M. Licdao, 39, was standing near the corner of Quezon Avenue and Scout Santiago Street when an unidentified man with a gun beat him up to a pulp at about 1:15 a.m. yesterday.

Licdao, of Sapang Palay, Bulacan, was waiting for his wife, who worked at a nearby eatery, when the beating happened, said SPO4 Edmund Senido, Kamuning police station desk officer.

Licdao said the armed man was with two other men on board a blue Vesta van (UDM-345) and was apparently "looking for a good time" since he was negotiating with an alleged pimp.

Licdao said that the pimp suddenly ran away from the van and the man with the gun ran after him. The alleged pimp was able to get away, he said.

Licdao said the man then approached him and shouted at him, "Don't ever stay here again or I will kill you!"

Then, without a warning, the man kicked Licdao in the ribs and punched him in the left eye, SPO4 Senido said. When he noticed that a woman had seen the assault, the suspect boarded the van which then sped away, Licdao said.

Philip C. Tubeza

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Former bodyguard of Jalosjos gets his jail wish

BY AGNES E. DONATO

A CONVICT out on parole, who was the bodyguard of Rep. Romeo Jalosjos inside the new Bilibid Prison in Muntinlupa, is now back behind bars where he longed to be.

Police said Jovet Badore, 32, of Barangay Cupang, Antipolo, even encouraged the complainant, Emilio Reyes, 48, to file robbery charges against him because he wanted to continue serving his congressman-boss in jail.

"File charges against me," Badore reportedly urged policemen. "I want to be together with my boss (Jalosjos) inside the jail."

Police said Badore robbed Reyes' firm, Kaysakat Construction in Barangay San Jose, Antipolo, of construction materials worth P28,000 at about 8 p.m. Wednesday.

When police arrested him, Badore readily admitted to the robbery and even reportedly threatened to go on committing crimes if the police did not send him back to jail.

Badore said he found it hard to lead a life outside prison.

"When I was freed, I realized how hard it is to adjust to life outside," Badore said. "Inside Bilibid, I seldom had problems and I never went hungry because (Jalosjos) supported me."

In prison, Badore became a member of the dreaded Batang City Jail while serving his sentence for another robbery offense.

When Jalosjos was sentenced to life for statutory rape, the congressman made Badore one of his personal guards.

Complainant Reyes has already filed robbery charges against Badore before the Antipolo City prosecutor's office.

Badore is detained at the Antipolo City detention cell.

Pregnant woman catches mate raping her child

BY PHILIP C. TUBEZA

A PREGNANT housewife nearly gave birth when she caught her third husband raping her 14-year-old daughter on Tuesday morning in Quezon City.

The woman, a resident of Barangay Manresa, Quezon City, who is nine months pregnant, is now in the hospital due to shock and anxiety after she saw her husband Eduardo, 47, on top of her daughter right inside the couple's bedroom, said Insp. Narcisa Silva of the La Loma police station.

Police are now hunting down Eduardo, a carpenter, who fled.

The woman told police that at about 3 a.m., she was awakened by a rasping sound beside her.

The couple slept on the floor.

She said that when she opened her eyes, she saw her husband sexually abusing her daughter, Silva said.

She cried out in anger and tried to rise and push the suspect away from her daughter. But before she could get a hold of him, Eduardo quickly got up, dressed, and fled, police said.

The women said she then felt a crippling pain in her stomach, like she was going to give birth right there. Instead of going after the suspect, neighbors brought her to a Quezon City hospital, Silva said.

The 14-year-old girl later told police that the suspect had been abusing her since he and her mother started living together.

Soldier shot dead over P1

FOR PAYING a jeepney barker a measly P1, a soldier of the Philippine Army who was moonlighting as a jeepney driver paid for his life when the barker stabbed him dead Wednesday afternoon.

Sgt. Freddie Licudan, a resident of Fort Bonifacio, died while being treated for stab wounds in different parts of the body at the Army General Hospital.

His attacker was identified as Marlon Aguilar, 22, a resident of Cornejo Street, Malibay, Pasay City. He is detained at the Makati jail.

SPO1 Lewellie Cristobal of the Makati City Police Homicide Section said that Licudan parked his passenger jeepney at the corner of Edsa and Mckinley Road, Makati City to pick up passengers. Aguilar started calling for passengers.

When the jeepney was full, Licudan gave the barker P1. This angered the barker, who stabbed him. *Alcuin Papa*

Vendor slain for refusing drink

BY CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

A YOUNG vendor who refused an invitation to join a drinking session was shot dead by a still unknown gunman in Malabon on Wednesday night, police said yesterday.

The suspect pumped at least three bullets in the face and arm of Romy Santos, 19, of Lacson Street, Barangay Panday Pira, Tondo, Manila, police said.

Malabon police said Santos and his mother-in-law Dolores Martin, 36, were on their way home to Sitio 6, Catmon dumpsite, Barangay Catmon at about 9:30 p.m. Wednesday when they passed a group of men, one of whom asked the young man to join them in drinking.

PO2 Christopher Rodriguez and PO1 Redentor Mantala Jr. said Santos cordially declined the invitation, but this apparently enraged the unidentified man who had made the offer.

The unidentified man pulled out a gun and shot Santos in the head, upper lip and right arm, police said. Police are hunting the suspect.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, February 16, 2001
6th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: **Gen 11:1-9**
Gospel: **Mk 8:34—9:1**

Jesus called the people and his disciples and said, "If you want to follow me, deny yourself, take up your cross and follow me. For if you choose to save your life, you will lose it; and if you lose your life for my sake and for the sake of the Gospel, you will save it.

What good is it to gain the whole world but destroy yourself? There is nothing you can give to recover your life. I tell you: If anyone is ashamed of me and of my words among this adulterous and sinful people, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when he comes in the Glory of his Father with the holy angels."

And he went on to say, "Truly I tell you, there are some here who will not die before they see the kingdom of God coming with power."

Commentary:

We do not have to wait until after death to know what heaven is like. Heaven is about the pursuit of real and lasting happiness. In present-day consumer societies, where having is valued over being, people often find their lives turning into hell because they have allowed having to define their notion of gain and loss. The material gain makes them overlook more fundamental losses. They find themselves in abundance but feeling empty. Those who dare to pursue genuine happiness are led to the path of self-denial where loss is really gain, and a foretaste of eternal life.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

CRIMINAL LAW (CRIMES AGAINST PROPERTY)—Complex crime of robbery with homicide—The taking with intent to gain of personal property belonging to another by means of violence against or intimidation of persons or using force upon things constitutes robbery and the complex crime of robbery with homicide arises when, by reason of or on the occasion of a robbery by means of violence against or intimidation of persons, someone is killed. All the essential elements of robbery with homicide are present in this case. Personal property were carted away by accused-appellant and his companions. And during the heist, the housekeepers were mercilessly raped and knifed to death. The fact that the housekeepers were killed first before the robbery does not detract from accused-appellant's culpability for the special complex crime of robbery with homicide. The homicide may precede the robbery or may occur after the robbery, as what is essential is that there is a direct relation, an intimate connection between the robbery and the killing. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Pardo, First Division, People v. Maneng, G.R. No. 123147, October 13, 2000]

DIGEST BY R.B. VERA

1 killed in Universal Robina Corp. robbery

BY AGNES E. DONATO

TEN armed men in police uniforms killed an employee and robbed a warehouse of the Universal Robina Corp. in Pasig City on Wednesday night.

Reynan Legaspi, a helper at URC, was shot when he allegedly tried to resist the robbers from stripping him of his valuables.

Legaspi died while being treated at the Pasig City Medical Center on Shaw Boulevard, police said.

Police said the armed men arrived at the URC compound on Amang Rodriguez Avenue in Rosario, Pasig City on board a white L-300 van with no license plates at about 7:15 p.m.

Clad in fatigue pants and black shirts with "Police" written on the back, the armed men managed to get inside the warehouse by closely tailing an entering URC truck, police said.

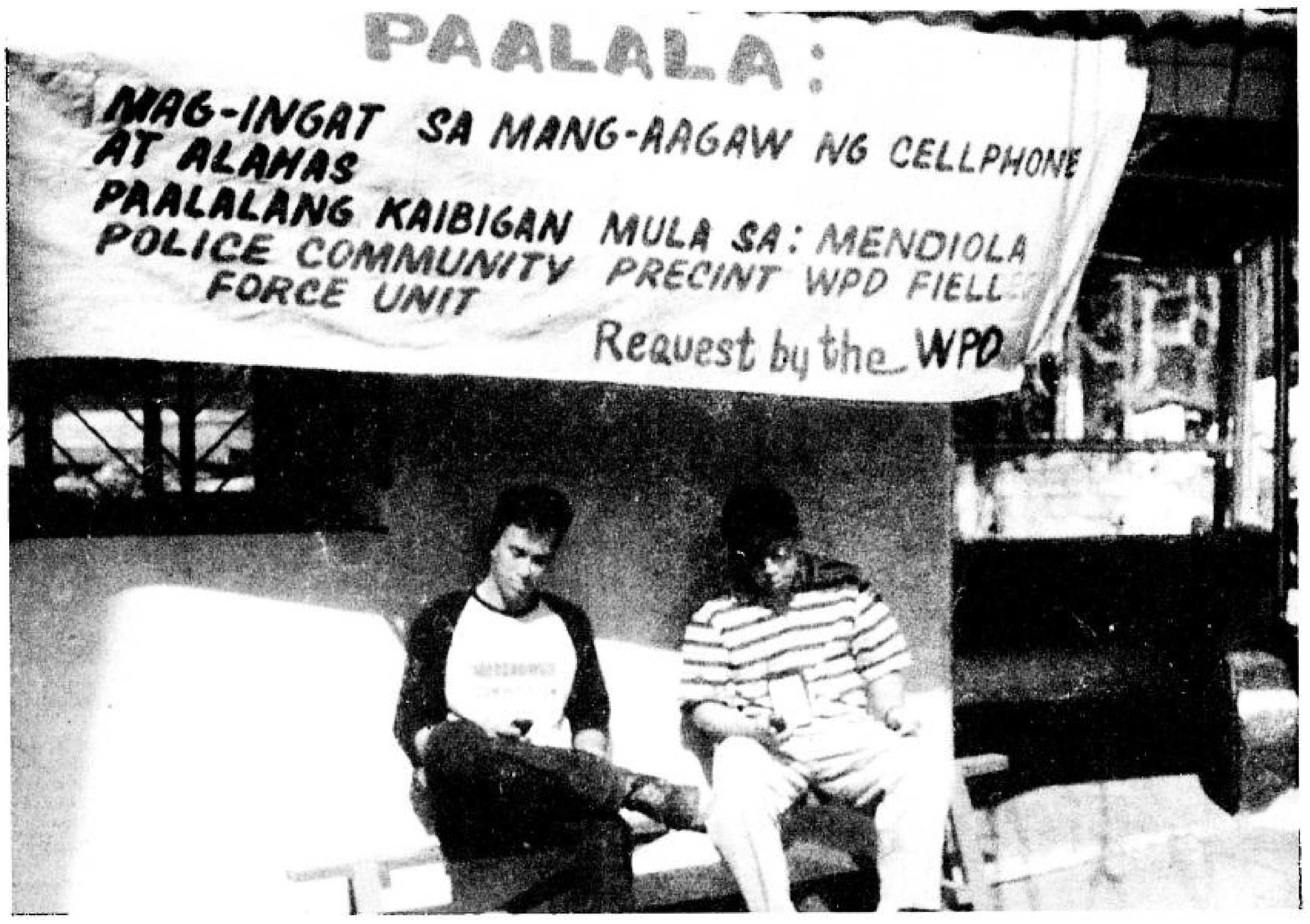
The armed men then hit the lone guard, Rodolfo Raro, with the butt of a gun and immediately secured the area. They ordered the rest of the employees to lie on the floor face down.

Police said the armed men ordered cashier Ester Cathouela to open the vault of the warehouse and took about P250,000 in it.

The robbers also reportedly stripped the employees of their personal cash and valuables and then shot Legaspi.

When the armed men left, Legaspi's companions took him to the hospital, police said.

Authorities are looking into the possible involvement of a URC worker who might have given information to the robbers.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FRIENDLY REMINDER

Two men send text messages under a streamer put up by the Western Police District to warn the public against snatchers of cell phones and jewelry, at the Mendiola police precinct.

CALOY SANCHEZ

Word war starts between Phillip, Abalos

BY AGNES E. DONATO

MANDALUYONG vice mayor wannabe and movie actor Phillip Salvador has insisted that he is a longtime resident of the city, disputing the earlier statement of incumbent Mayor Benhur Abalos that he had not lived long enough in the city to know the needs of the residents.

Salvador stressed that he was a "true-blue" Mandaluyong resident and that he got most of his education from a university in Mandaluyong.

"I attended the Jose Rizal University during my elementary and high school years," Salvador said. "I even took up Accounting in this same university, way back when it was still called Jose Rizal College."

Abalos, who would be running for another term under the Lakas-NUCD party, maintained that Salvador "may not even know how many barangays are there in Mandaluyong."

But Salvador, who claimed he has been living for eight years now at the Pinnacle Condominium in Barangay Wack-Wack, said he even has relatives in barangays Barangka Ibaba and Pagasa.

He also refuted criticisms that he had been using his fame and money to get the people's votes. Salvador had reportedly been giving big donations at wakes and attending birthday parties as part of his gimmick to draw the crowd closer to him.

Salvador said he could not see anything wrong in giving away his money.

"At least I did not steal the money," he said. "I earned it from my work as an actor."

Salvador on Sunday launched his "Kaibigan Ko si Ipe" and "Ka-Ipe Movement" with a motorcade. He was accompanied by Partido ng Masang Pilipino's mayoral candidate Ernesto Domingo and the party's bets for councilor.

San Juan mayor Jinggoy Estrada and other show biz personalities like Smokey Manaloto, Nini Jacinto, Tina Paner, Bayani Agbayani and Beth Tamayo also graced the launch.

'Diaper Gang' suspects charged

BY MICHAEL LIM UBAC

THE LEADERS of a syndicate selling baby and adult diapers, which were stolen from a local importer of Indonesian-brand diapers in Valenzuela City, were formally charged by the National Bureau of Investigation early this week.

Charged before the Malabon prosecutor's office were Virgilio M. Reyes, 49, of Pasolo, Valenzuela City; Daniel R. Akil, 36, of Sta. Ana, Manila; and Romeld E. Artilado, 22, of Karuhatan, Valenzuela City, according to lawyer Samuel Fiji of the NBI Anti-Organized Crime Division (AOCD).

Reyes, Pasolo and Artilado, who are all facing charges of qualified theft, are detained at the NBI jail. AOCD agents caught them in an operation in Valenzuela on Feb. 8, but details of the operation were released to reporters only yesterday.

During the operation, the agents seized more than 500 pieces of diapers, mostly Lovesome diapers, in five boxes.

Fiji said the suspects were employees of the Consumer Commodities International Inc. (CCII), which imports adult and baby diapers from Indonesia.

"CCI conducted an inventory of stocks last January and discovered that several boxes of diapers worth more than a hundred thousand pesos were missing," Fiji said.

Fiji said he dispatched his men to the CCII compound on Governor Pascual Street in Malabon. On Feb. 8, Fiji's men were tipped off that five boxes of Lovesome diapers belonging to CCII were being unloaded from one of the firm's delivery vans into the house at 173 San Miguel Homes on Pasolo Road in Valenzuela.

"The owner of the house, a certain Rose, willingly turned over to the NBI agents five boxes of diapers," Fiji said.

He said Rose told him that her estranged husband, Reyes, a CCII driver, had brought the diapers.

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TURNOVER

New National Capital Region Police Office chief Romeo Pena (right) receives the NCRPO flag from Philippine National Police chief Leandro Mendoza in a ceremony in Quezon City. Pena's predecessor Edgar Aglipay is behind Mendoza.

EDWIN BACASMAS

Manila councilor blames officials for short-time rule violations

BY JEROME ANING

UNDERAGED lovers swamped hotels, motels and inns in Manila on Valentine's Day and the authorities did not do anything about it, an opposition councilor said yesterday.

Council minority floor leader Roger Garnale also criticized the Western Police District and the City Hall for allowing prostitution and the distribution of illegal drugs in these establishments.

Garnale, of the city's fifth district, said government authorities as well as operators of motels and inns are becoming increasingly negligent in enforcing an ordinance that bars minors from entering such establishments.

"Operators should keep in mind that in any business venture, there must be moral responsibility," Gernale said.

The councilor said he had received reports that many motels in Sta. Mesa and Ermita have violated City Ordinance 7774 which prohibits motels, inns, hostels and lodges from admitting or giving short-time accommodations to underaged lovers.

Violators of the local law face a P5,000-fine, a year in prison, or both.

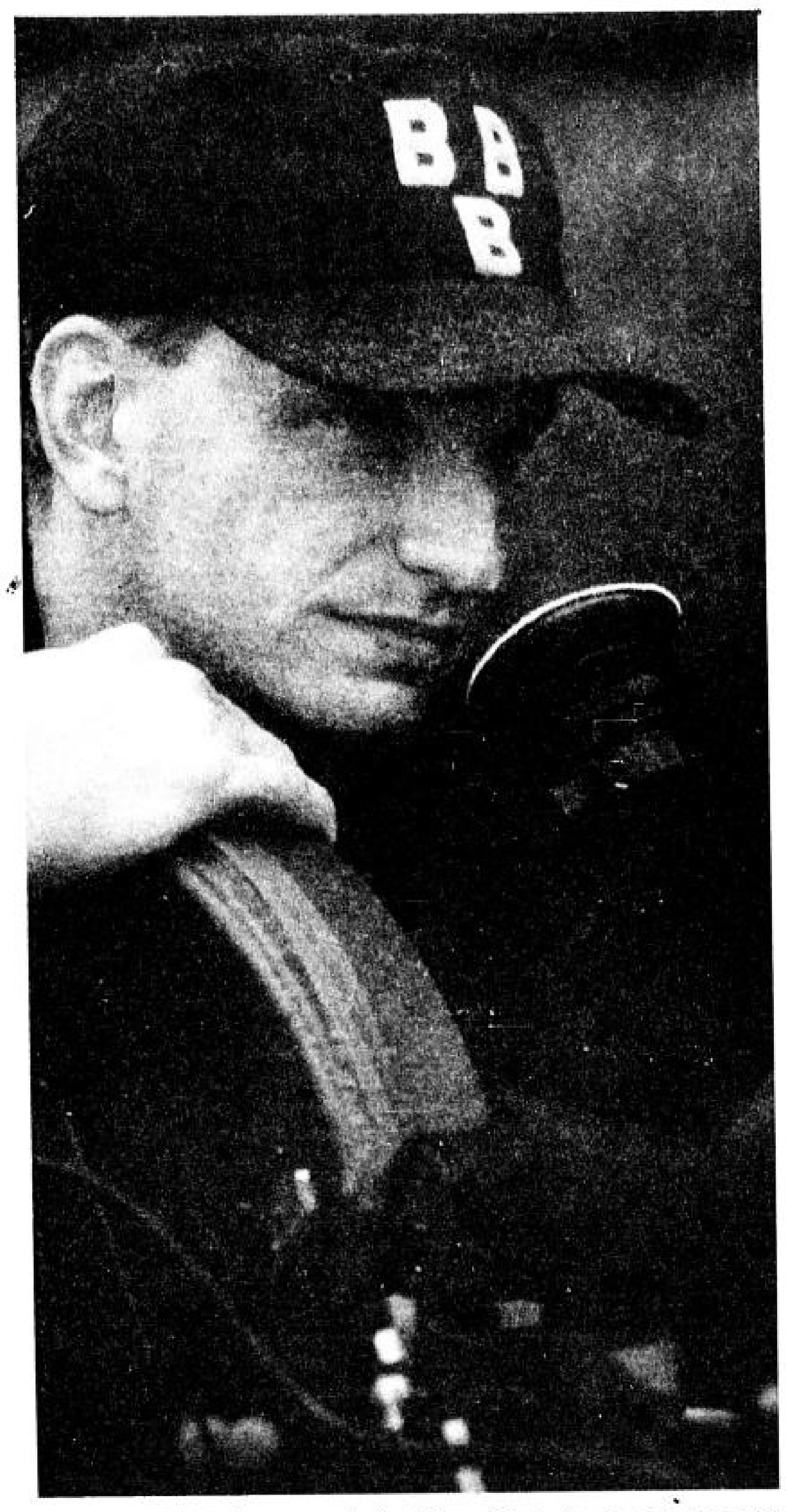
The councilor said several motels and inns in Sta. Cruz, Binondo, Tondo, and others near Manila's boundary with Pasay and Makati have been acting as fronts for prostitution and distribution of illegal drugs.

He said prostitutes are growing in number and have established contacts at the inns and motels where some employees allegedly act as pimps.

Alleged prostitutes are still "very much visible" along Rizal Avenue, on Ongpin Street in Binondo, and the red-light district in Ermita and Malate, the councilor added.

Gernale said his office is collecting evidence to pin down owners of motels and even big hotels for complicity in the prostitution and illegal drug rackets.

He said several scalawag policemen might even be protecting the illegal activities.



AT THE HELM of two nominated films, Soderbergh says he only wants to make more people watch more movies.

Soderbergh achieves rare feat in international-flavored Oscars

BEVERLY HILLS, California — Steven Soderbergh achieved something rare Tuesday: two best-director Oscar nominations in the same year. Ironically, that could hurt his chances of winning.

Soderbergh kept his head low, but to hear colleagues tell it, he does not plan to play favorites between his two hits last year, "Erin Brockovich" and "Traffic." If academy members split his vote, it could throw the contest to another director on March 25.

Soderbergh apparently intends to let Oscar voters choose, rather than declare which film he would prefer them to support.

"He has legitimately strong feelings for each film and very important relationships with people who worked on both movies," said Michael Shamberg, one of Soderbergh's producers on "Erin Brockovich."

"I hate to use a Hollywood metaphor, but it would be a 'Sophie's choice'" for Soderbergh to favor one film over the other, Shamberg said.

The other director nominees are Stephen Daldry of New Zealand for "Billy Elliot," Ang Lee of Taiwan for "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" and Ridley Scott for "Gladiator."

Soderbergh was pondering the possibility of a dual nomination even before "Traffic" hit theaters in December.

"It's hard to comment on something that A, is out of my control, and B, is many weeks away," he said in an interview that month. "I just try to take it as it comes, and if it comes, you hope it does what these things were designed to do in the first place, which is to get more people to go see these movies."

In New Jersey on Tuesday filming his next movie, a remake of the casino-heist caper "Ocean's Eleven," the director declined interview requests, issuing a prepared statement.

"I think if I didn't have the distraction of shooting a film, I would have to be sedated. I'm so happy for everyone associated with both films and so honored to be recognized with this wonderful group of nominees," he said.

Soderbergh also has two nominations from the Directors Guild of America and had two for the Golden Globes. Lee won the Globe, and the guild awards will be presented two weeks before the Oscars.

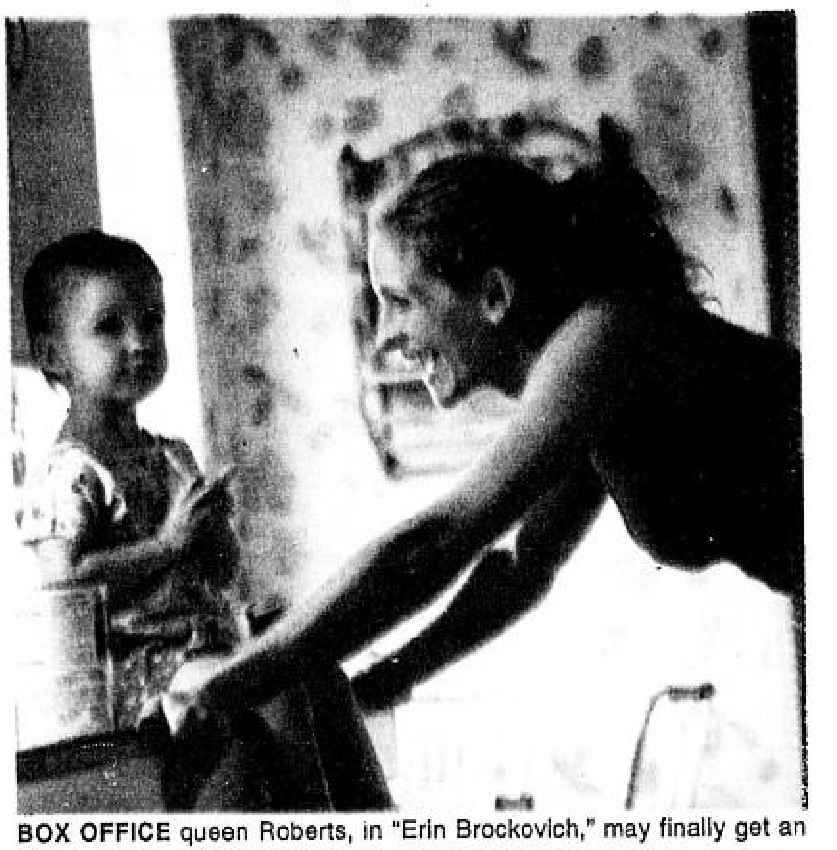
Michael Curtiz was the last director to receive two Oscar nominations in one year, in 1938 for "Angels with Dirty Faces" and "Four Daughters." He lost to Frank Capra for "You Can't Take It With You."

From 1950 to 1974, academy rules prohibited directors from getting two nods in one year. The rule was changed in 1975, a year after Francis Ford Coppola was nominated for "The Godfather, Part II" but not for his acclaimed film "The Conversation."

Soderbergh, a past nominee for the screenplay of his indie debut "sex, lies and videotape," had trouble finding an audience for his 1990s films, which include "Kafka," "King of the Hill" and "The Underneath."

He made two critical successes in the late 1990s, "Out of Sight" and "The Limey," before rising to box-office prominence last year.

Roman epic "Gladiator" and Chinese martial-arts romance "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" left other Oscar contenders in their chariot dust, earning 12 and 10 nominations respectively.



BOX OFFICE queen Roberts, in "Erin Brockovich," may finally get an Academy Award.

"Gladiator" and "Crouching Tiger" will fight it out for best picture at the 73rd Academy Awards on March 25, along with "Traffic," "Chocolat" and "Erin Brockovich."

"Gladiator" —the story of a Roman general (Russell Crowe) reduced to slavery and forced to fight in the Coliseum—marks the return to Hollywood respectability of the ancient epic, once a favorite genre here.

And the unprecedented 10 Oscar nominations for Mandarin-language "Crouching Tiger" could mean that Oscar has finally gone global.

The movie's nominations Tuesday for best picture and best foreign language film are only the third time a film has been nominated in both categories, and seem to mark a breakthrough in this country for non-English-language films.

The recognition came as box office figures showed "Crouching Tiger" is now the highest grossing foreign-language film ever released in the United States and Canada.

The Mandarin-language martial-arts romance "Crouching Tiger" was

SODERBERGH/P.A28

From dog-killer to pooch lover – and back again

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

DALMATIANS and **Glenn Close** are delightful creatures, but they quickly overstay their welcome in the sequel, "102 Dalmatians." This time around, they're joined by the similarly engaging **Gerald Depardieu** and a talking parrot that thinks it's a dog (and thus refuses to fly), among other droll creatures.

But the effect isn't as entertaining as the movie's makers hope because, despite its additional characters, the sequel travels through pretty much the same territory as the original movie, with a few novel detours, of course.

The twist in "102 Dalmatians" is **Cruella De Vil**'s transformation, through Pavlovian aversion-attraction therapy, from dog-killer to pooh-lover—and back again. Bombarded with positive images of canines in prison, she learns to hate furriers and to love the dogs she used to despise and abuse when the Devil still had a firm grip on her cold, cold heart.

Now that she's been "dog-hate detoxified," she's changed even her name, from Cruella to the decidedly sunnier "**Ella.**" Her wardrobe, too, has undergone a radical change, from dark dominatrix hues to Pollyanna pastels and white.

A subplot involves a young man who runs a haven for stray dogs. Alas, the brave, little center for canines is about to be shut down for failing to pay its rent—until the reformed "Ella" comes to its rescue with her huge fortune.

Not only does she purchase the center, but she also transforms it from ramshackle to chic. Unfortunately, her goody-two-shoes period is terribly brief, and she soon goes back to her devilish, evilish ways, giving the sickeningly tweetums Ella the boot, and Cruella makes a flashy comeback—with a vengeance!

Once Cruella is back is business, she revives her pet project of having Depardieu's character, **Jean Pierre Le Pelt**, design a fur coat to end all fur coats, made out of the hides of 102 dalmatian puppies. And we're back on too-too familiar ground again.

GLENN Close reprises her role as Cruella De Vil in the sequel, "102 Dalmatians."

Granted, the parrot that thinks it's a dog is a delight, and the film puts on a most inventive show for its finale, with Cruella being forced to go through the various machines and processes of a cake "factory." But these plus factors can't make up for the sequel's predictability and inability to take its material to a new level that's original and entertaining in its own right.

The biggest loser in this production is Depardieu, who cannot even begin to approximate the "operatic" scale of Glenn Close's sense of super-villainy as Cruella. Depardieu is even upstaged by his furry wardrobe, not to mention by the antic actor who plays Cruella's aide, sidekick and personal punching bag.

TV treats

TUESDAY, Feb. 20 at 9 p.m. on Star Movies: "When A Man Loves A Woman," starring **Andy Garcia** and **Meg Ryan**. Ryan plays an alcoholic mother of two who struggles through rehab, while Garcia is her husband. He valiantly tries to support his wife, but proves to be helpless against her intense addiction to alcohol.

At 1 p.m. on Star Movies, "Office Space" topbills **Jennifer Aniston**, **Ron Livingston** and **David Herman** as three friends who are laid off by the company they work for. To avenge themselves, they conspire to plant a computer virus that will embezzle money from the firm, into their account. (Replay on Sunday, Feb. 25 at 7 p.m.).

Wednesday, Feb. 21 at 8 p.m. on Viva Cinema: "Sana Bukas Pa Ang Kahapon" starring **Hilda Koronel**, **Lorna Tolentino**, **Maria Isabel Lopez**, **Dindo Fernando** and **Jay Ilagan**. The three lead actresses play friends who make their way in the big city. One ends up as the mistress of a wealthy man, the second becomes a suicidal prostitute, and the third finds true love where it has been waiting all along.

Thursday, Feb. 22 at 7 a.m. on Star Movies: "Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure" (replays on Feb. 23 at 5:15 a.m. and Feb. 28 at 9 a.m.). **Keanu Reeves** and **Alex Winter** play high school students who dread their upcoming history exam. They use a magic telephone booth to time-travel through history, enlisting the help of famous people like **Napoleon** and **Socrates**, with hilarious results.

Rica rolls underwater and has more sexy scenes in new movie

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salteri

WHAT'S in store for **Rica Peralejo** after the groundbreaking "Balahibong Pusa"?

You'd probably guess that Rica would make another daring movie in which she'd take off her clothes again, like what she did in "Balahibong Pusa." You're right.

But Viva Films recently gave Rica her own movie, "Huling Paghihintay," costarring **Bernard Palanca**.

When she took the role of the nymphet in "Balahibong Pusa," Rica did not really expect the small role to make a mark in the minds of moviegoers and critics alike. But it did. Her standout performance brought closer to the eye of the public. Suddenly, she's no longer the teenybopper who does girl-next-door roles but a promising actress who is willing to tackle challenging parts.

"Believe it or not, when the role in 'Balahibong Pusa' was first offered to me, I turned it down," Rica says. "But after it was turned down by other actresses, it was offered to me again. It was a tough decision for, but now I'm glad I made it."

Rica has a hectic calendar for the year. She has, in fact, started work on two new movies. One, "Buhay Kamao," is an action vehicle about a boxer's life, with **Robin Padilla**. The other is her solo movie, "Huling Paghihintay."

"When (director) **Erik Matti** told me we were going to do my launching movie, I didn't believe him right away. But when we started discussing the story, the script and even the budget, I was convinced the project was really mine. I'm slowly achieving my dream."

Rica says she is cautious about her career moves. She doesn't want to be a mere flavor of the month after "Balahibong Pusa." She wants a lasting career.

When the cameras started grinding for "Huling Paghihintay," Rica knew her days of malling, shopping, watching movies or even playing badminton were numbered. Her first shooting day alone was exhausting. She did an underwater love scene that took 14 hours to shoot. She even had to attend a swimming workshop before doing the scene.

"We started around 4 p.m. and I got home early the following morning," Rica recalls. "Although it was a love scene, Bernard and I had to do a lot of rolling underwater. And I had to look fresh all the time.

"I also had to practice my breathing underwater. The longest that I was able to hold my breath was more than 20 seconds. It was good enough."

The result of the preparations produced a beautiful and artistic love scene, according to Viva insiders who saw the rushes of the movie.

'Hannibal' cut up

WE learned that **Ridley Scott**'s "Hannibal," the sequel to **Jonathan Demme**'s award-winning "Silence of the Lambs," was disapproved by the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board because of its too gory scenes.

Some of the scenes are said to be so gory they could make you want to puke, like the one where **Ray Liotta**'s forehead is slashed and his brain is taken out, fried and later given to him to eat.

"Hannibal" was supposed to be shown Wednesday, but on Monday, its print ads were pulled out from newspapers.

We wonder what rating the film will receive from the local censors.

"Hannibal" is the film version of the best-selling novel by **Thomas Harris**, who also wrote "Silence of the Lambs."

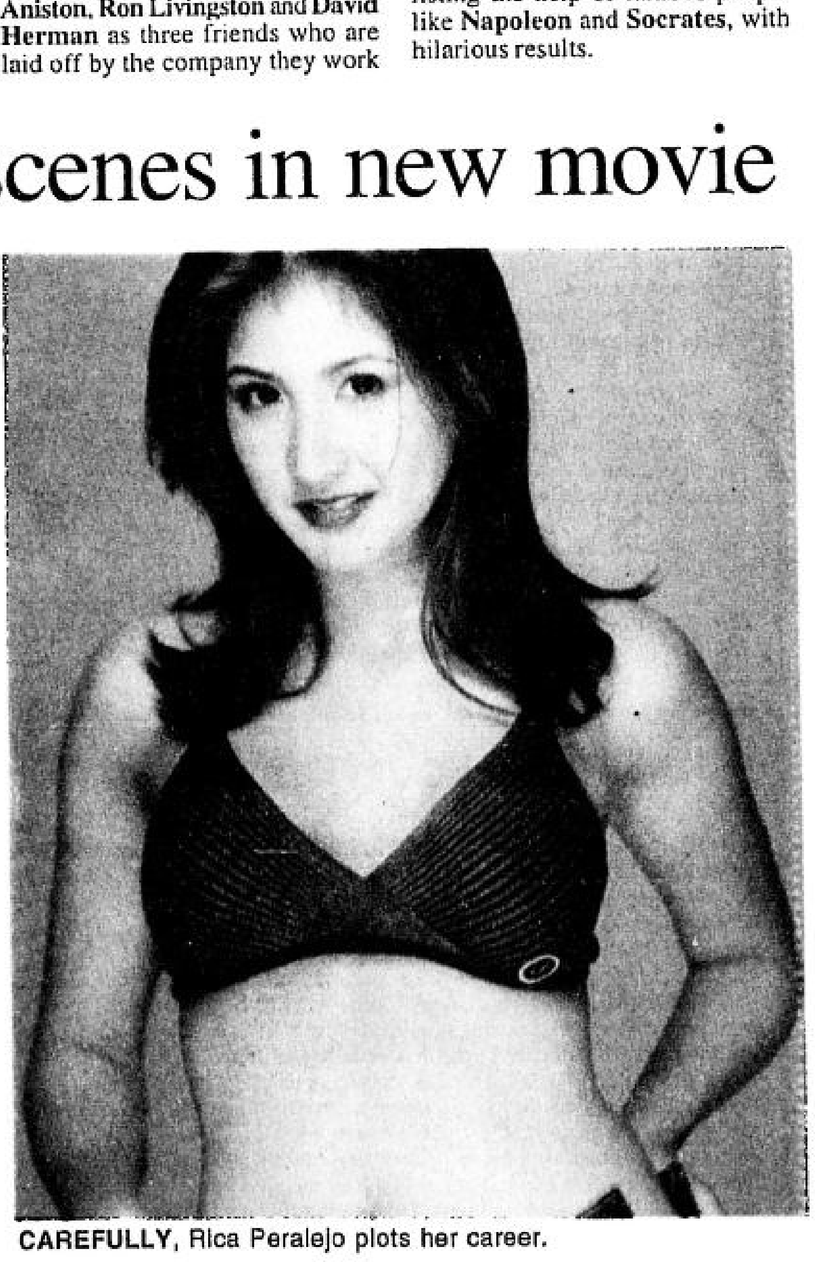
Anthony Hopkins, who won the 1991 Oscar best actor for "Silence of the Lambs," reprises his role as **Hannibal "The Cannibal" Lecter**. **Julianne Moore** steps into the shoes of **Jodie Foster** as FBI agent **Clarice Starling**. But Moore's role in the movie is too brief to make a mark. No wonder Foster turned it down.

Demme, who also won an Oscar trophy for directing "Silence of the Lambs," and screenwriter **Ted Dally** did not work on the sequel. Scott directed "Hannibal" after his latest box office hit, "Gladiator."

David Mamet wrote the initial screenplay adaptation of the novel, but later junked the project, which was then turned over to **Steven Zallian**, Oscar winner for writing "Schindler's List."

The ending of "Hannibal" the movie is different from the ending of the novel—for cinematic purposes, we suppose. But we won't pre-empt our readers, of course.

I remember after Premiere Magazine wrote how the lead characters of "Perfect Storm" died at sea, the magazine editors were barraged with endless complaints from their readers.



CAREFULLY, Rica Peralejo plots her career.

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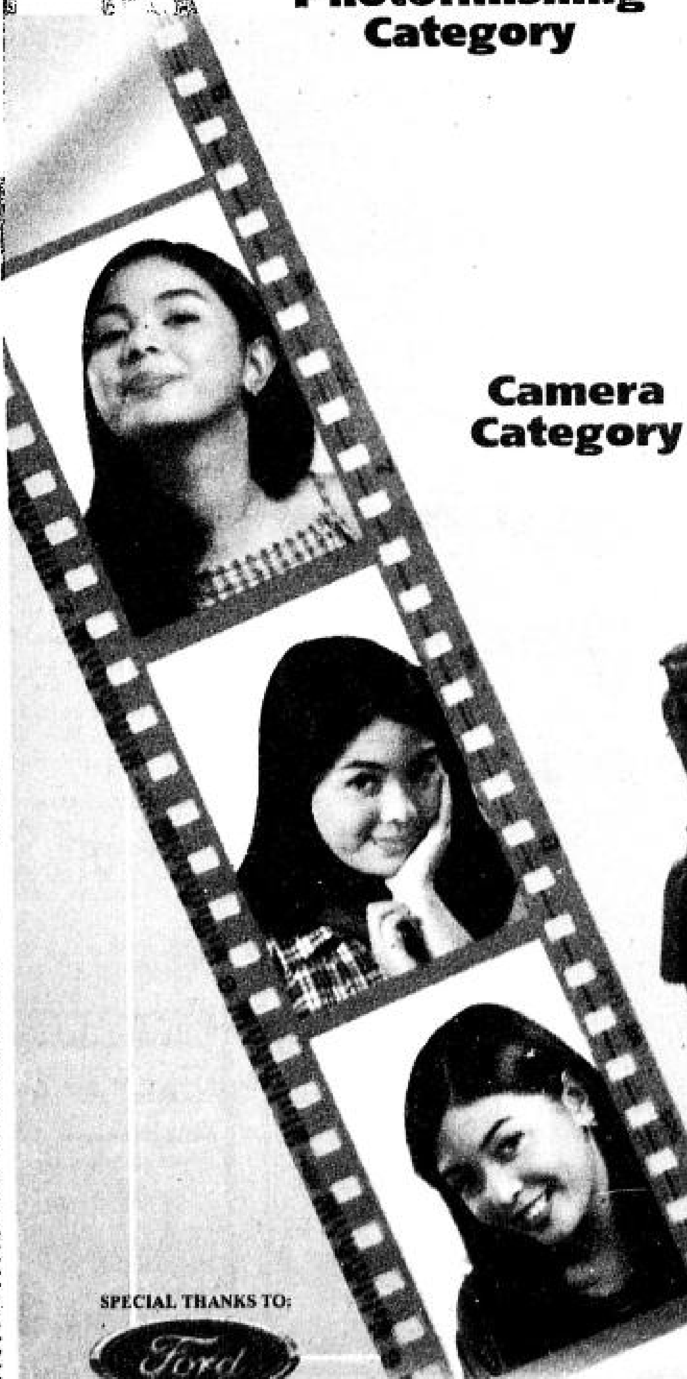

Consolation Prizes

This is a raffle promotion that involves the purchase of:
1. films
2. photofinishing/developing services
3. cameras

A. **Categories**

There will be three (3) categories to this promotion: film, photofinishing/developing, and camera. Each category has its respective drop box.

B. **How to Join:**

1. Customer must write his/her NAME, ADDRESS, TELEPHONE/CONTACT NUMBER/S, SIGNATURE, OUTLET/DEALER, SALESPERSON on the back of any empty box of FUJICOLOR YKL 100, FUJICOLOR SUPERIA 100/200/400, FUJICOLOR EXTRA, FUJICOLOR 800, FUJICOLOR REALA, FUJICOLOR PROVIA, FUJICOLOR VELVIA, FUJICOLOR NEXIA or FUJI NEOPAN FILM and drop it at TRIPLE PHOTO PANALO Drop Box in participating FUJIFILM dealers/photo shops.
2. For every roll of film (ANY BRAND) processed at participating FUJIFILM dealers/photo shops, a customer will get ONE (1) Triple Photo Panalo raffle coupon on which he/she must fill-in his/her NAME, ADDRESS, TELEPHONE/CONTACT NUMBER/S,SIGNATURE, OUTLET/ DEALER, SALESPERSON and drop it at its respective TRIPLE PHOTO PANALO Drop Box in participating FUJIFILM dealers/photo shops.
3. For purchase of any FUJIFILM or YKL CAMERA, a customer gets a raffle coupon. One (1) raffle coupon per transaction. Customer must fill-in his/her NAME, ADDRESS, TELEPHONE/CONTACT NUMBER/S, SIGNATURE, OUTLET/DEALER, SALESPERSON and drop the coupon in its respective TRIPLE PHOTO PANALO Drop Box in participating FUJIFILM dealers/photo shops.

C. **Rules**

1. Promo duration: This promotion will start on January 28, 2001 and will end on June 11, 2001.
2. The GRAND RAFFLE DRAW will be held on June 28, 2001 at Eat Bulaga noontime show, GMA-Channel 7 with the presence of DTI, YKL, and Jimenez D'Arcy representatives.
3. Last day of submission of entries will be on June 11, 2001.
4. 106 winners (6 grand prizes and 100 consolation prizes).
5. Allocation of Prizes:
   a. Film Box Category:
   - Two (2) winners of Ford F-150 Lariat A/T 2000 (1-for NCR & REGION 4 and 1-for ALL OTHER REGIONS)
   - Thirty-three (33) winners of Fujifilm Instax 100 cameras & film (16- for NCR & REGION 4 and 17-for ALL OTHER REGIONS).

   b. Photofinishing/Developing Category:
   - Two (2) winners of Ford Ranger XLT 4x2 (1-for NCR & REGION 4 and 1-for ALL OTHER REGIONS).
   - Thirty-three (33) winners of Fujifilm Instax 100 cameras & film (16- for NCR & REGION 4 and 17- for ALL OTHER REGIONS).

   c. Camera Category:
   - Two (2) winners of Speed Fight 2 Peugeot 50cc Motorcycle (1-for NCR & REGION 4 and 1-for ALL OTHER REGIONS).
   - Thirty-four (34) winners of Fujifilm Instax 100 cameras & film (17-for NCR & REGION 4 and 17-for ALL OTHER REGIONS).
6. A winner can only win once. If a name is drawn more than once, he/she gets the bigger prize in all categories. Prizes are not convertible to cash.
7. Winners shall be asked to present their claim stub portion of the raffle coupon (for photofinishing and camera category) and any of the following identification papers (School/company ID, driver's license, any ID with picture).
8. Employees of YKL, Jimenez D'Arcy and participating FUJIFILM dealers/photo shops and their representatives, including relatives up to second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the promo.
9. Winners will be announced via print ads and will be notified by registered mail as to where he/she can claim the prize. Prizes can be claimed within 60 days from receipt of notification. Winners of Fujifilm Instax 100 Cameras can claim their prize at corresponding YKL owned store specified in the registered mail. Winners of Ford F-150 Lariat A/T 2000, Ford Ranger XLT 4x2 and Speed Fight 2 Peugeot 50cc Motorcycle can be claimed from Mr. Sonny Teves at YKL head office at 24 Sto. Domingo Road, Quezon City. Prizes not claimed within the given period will be forfeited in favor of YKL. with prior approval of DTI.
10. The winner agrees to pay the 20% withholding tax on prizes more than P 10,000.

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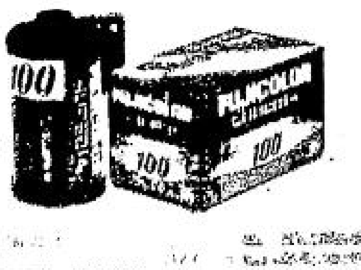
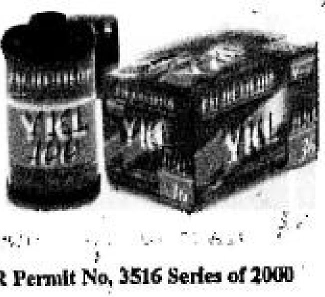


FUJICOLOR YKL 100



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Soderbergh achieves rare feat in international-flavored Oscars

(From page A26)

only the third movie ever to be up for both best picture and best foreign film, following the 1998 Italian drama "Life is Beautiful" and the 1969 French-Algerian "Z."

Last weekend, "Crouching Tiger" hit $60 million at the box-office, breaking the record of "Life is Beautiful" for a foreign-language film.

Benicio Del Toro's supporting-actor nomination for the American film "Traffic" came for a role spoken largely in Spanish. If he wins, he would join Robert De Niro ("Godfather Part II") as the only actors to claim Oscars for foreign-language performances in American films.

Edward Zwick, a producer on "Traffic," said he has noticed an increased international influence on US-made films, partly because of the growing importance of overseas revenues. Foreign income is typically higher than Hollywood's domestic box-office take for most films.

Bardem, who played Cuban poet Reinaldo Arenas in "Before Night Falls," said he was thrilled to be the first Spaniard ever nominated for best actor.

"I feel like Christopher Columbus—I discovered America," he said. "The miracle here is that somebody from outside—even in an American movie—is able to be right there."

Binoche, star of the English-language French romance "Chocolat," is the second French actress, after Isabelle Adjani, to receive two Oscar nominations. She won the supporting actress prize four years ago for "The English Patient."

"I think Americans are open-minded and they're probably used to seeing people from different countries," she said. "I feel blessed, I feel desired in America: Americans are happy to have successful people."

"Chocolat" distributor Miramax has been a perennially fierce Oscar campaigner. In the weeks leading up to the nominations, Miramax cofounder Harvey Weinstein stumped hard to raise academy awareness for "Chocolat," even visiting a Washington, DC, theater to talk up the film.

Miramax has been accused of campaigning its way to nominations and even Oscars themselves, notably its best-picture win for "Shakespeare in Love" over "Saving Private Ryan" two years ago.

"There's no way to influence or buy a vote on the Oscars," Weinstein said Tuesday. "That's the most insane and stupid thing. People who say that are so naive, they don't understand the Oscar race. The only thing you can do with an Oscar movie is create awareness that gets people to see your movie." *Inquirer wires*

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1	DOLBY SURROUND	IKA-7 GLORYA
2	DOLBY SURROUND	102 DALMATIANS
3	DOLBY DIGITAL	CAST AWAY
4	DOLBY SURROUND	BOUNCE
5	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	VERTICAL LIMIT
6	DOLBY SURROUND	FAMILY MAN
7	DOLBY SURROUND	NURSE BETTY
8	DOLBY SURROUND	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS

SM CENTERPOINT 7149522 • 7161416

1	DOLBY SURROUND	FAMILY MAN
2	DOLBY SURROUND	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
3	DTS	CAST AWAY
4	DOLBY SURROUND	NURSE BETTY
5	DOLBY DIGITAL	VERTICAL LIMIT
6	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	102 DALMATIANS
7	DOLBY SURROUND	PROOF OF LIFE
8	DOLBY SURROUND	CAST AWAY
9	DOLBY SURROUND	BOUNCE
10	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	BOOBA

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 9350749

1	DOLBY SURROUND	PROOF OF LIFE
2	DOLBY SURROUND	WHAT WOMEN WANT
3	DOLBY SURROUND	VIRGIN WIFE
4	DOLBY DIGITAL	CAST AWAY
5	DOLBY SURROUND	102 DALMATIANS
6	DOLBY SURROUND	FAMILY MAN
7	DOLBY DIGITAL	VERTICAL LIMIT
8	DOLBY SURROUND	CAST AWAY
9	DOLBY SURROUND	BOUNCE
10	DOLBY SURROUND	NURSE BETTY
11	DOLBY SURROUND	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
12	DOLBY SURROUND	BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA IYO

SM CITY MANILA 5239240

1	DOLBY DIGITAL	FAMILY MAN
2	DOLBY DIGITAL	VERTICAL LIMIT
3	DOLBY SURROUND	102 DALMATIANS
4	DOLBY SURROUND	CAST AWAY
5	DOLBY DIGITAL	NURSE BETTY
6	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	CAST AWAY
7	DOLBY SURROUND	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
8	DOLBY SURROUND	PROOF OF LIFE
9	DOLBY SURROUND	BOUNCE
10	DOLBY SURROUND	WHAT WOMEN WANT
11	DOLBY SURROUND	BOOBA
12	DOLBY SURROUND	VIRGIN WIFE

GUADALUPE COMM'L CTR 8820950

1	ULTRA SURROUND	VITAL PARTS
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	IKA-7 GLORYA
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	SYOTA NG BAYAN

SM MEGAMALL 6331901 • 6325401

1	DOLBY DIGITAL	VERTICAL LIMIT
2	DOLBY SURROUND	NURSE BETTY
3	DOLBY DIGITAL	FAMILY MAN
4	DTS	CAST AWAY
5	DOLBY SURROUND	BOUNCE
6	DOLBY SURROUND	102 DALMATIANS
7	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
8	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
9	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
10	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
12	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

SM CITY NORTH EDSA 9295452

1	DOLBY SURROUND	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
2	DOLBY SURROUND	WHAT WOMEN WANT
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	102 DALMATIANS
4	DOLBY SURROUND	BOUNCE
5	DOLBY SURROUND	FAMILY MAN
6	DOLBY SURROUND	NURSE BETTY
7	DTS	CAST AWAY
8	DOLBY DIGITAL	VERTICAL LIMIT
9	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CAST AWAY
10	DOLBY SURROUND	VIRGIN WIFE
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	PROOF OF LIFE
12	DOLBY SURROUND	BOOBA

SM SOUTHMALL 8066488 • 8066782

1	ULTRA SURROUND	VERTICAL LIMIT
2	ULTRA SURROUND	FAMILY MAN
3	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	102 DALMATIANS
4	ULTRA SURROUND	CAST AWAY
5	ULTRA SURROUND	VITAL PARTS
6	ULTRA SURROUND	BOOBA
7	ULTRA SURROUND	BOUNCE
8	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	CAST AWAY
9	ULTRA SURROUND	NURSE BETTY
10	ULTRA SURROUND	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS

TUTUBAN CENTER 2514302

1	ULTRA SURROUND	CAST AWAY
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	102 DALMATIANS
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS

SM CEBU 2313876

1	DOLBY SURROUND	CAST AWAY
2	ULTRA SURROUND	VERTICAL LIMIT
3	ULTRA SURROUND	BOUNCE
4	ULTRA SURROUND	BODY TO BODY
5	ULTRA SURROUND	RED PLANET
6	ULTRA SURROUND	BOOBA
7	DOLBY SURROUND	LITTLE NICKY

SM ILOILO 3209422

1	ULTRA SURROUND	BOOBA
2	ULTRA SURROUND	WHIPPED
3	ULTRA SURROUND	VERTICAL LIMIT
4	ULTRA SURROUND	RED PLANET
5	ULTRA SURROUND	BOUNCE
6	ULTRA SURROUND	CAST AWAY
7	ULTRA SURROUND	DUDE
8	ULTRA SURROUND	TABI TABI PO

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1	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	CAST AWAY
2	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	VERTICAL LIMIT
3	DOLBY SURROUND	PROOF OF LIFE
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	102 DALMATIANS
5	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	VITAL PARTS
6	DOLBY SURROUND	IKA-7 GLORYA

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	2	102 DALMATIANS	
	3	FAMILY MAN	
	4	VERTICAL LIMIT	
GLORIETTA 4 (All Digital Sound)	1	BOUNCE	In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
	2	WHAT WOMEN WANT	In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
	3	CAST AWAY THX	In DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND
	4	NURSE BETTY (Art Film)	In DTS DIGITAL SOUND
	5	102 DALMATIANS	In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
	6	FAMILY MAN	In DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
	7	PROOF OF LIFE	In DTS DIGITAL SOUND
GREENBELT	1	CAST AWAY	In DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
	2	FAMILY MAN	In SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND
	3	NURSE BETTY	In DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
	4	SOON TO OPEN Onstage	
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1	CAST AWAY THX	In DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
	2	FAMILY MAN	In DSD DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
	3	102 DALMATIANS	In DTS DIGITAL SOUND
	4	NURSE BETTY	In DTS DIGITAL SOUND
	5	BOUNCE	In DTS DIGITAL SOUND

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION
MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA (Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 (DDS) FAMILY MAN
2 (SDDS) CAST AWAY
3 (DTS) CAST AWAY
4 GOLD (DTS) PROOF OF LIFE
5 GOLD (DOLBY) BOUNCE
6 GOLD (SDDS) CLOSED
7 GOLD (DOLBY) VERTICAL LIMIT
8 [illegible] 102 DALMATIANS
9 [illegible] WHAT WOMEN WANT
10 [illegible] BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO

Pearl Plaza Cinemas (Parañaque) tel. 853.4486
1 SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
2 VIRGIN WIFE
3 (DTS) LAKAS AT PAG IBIG
4
5
6 (DTS) Golden Pearl THX

Masagana CINEMAX 1-2 & 3 (Kalaw) tel 536.4315
1 (DOLBY) FAMILY MAN
2 (DTS) LAKAS AT PAG IBIG
3 SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS

Masagana CINEMA (Pasay) tel 831.6603
1 VIRGIN WIFE
2 FAMILY WIFE
3 SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS

starmall Movies (Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986
1 CAST AWAY
2 LAKAS AT PAG-IBIG
3 BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL) 102 DALMATIANS
5 SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS

Metropolis (Alabang) tel 543.4001
1 LAKAS AT PAG IBIG
2 IKA-7 GLORYA
3 HAPLOS
4 BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO
5 VIRGIN WIFE
6 CAST AWAY
7 FAMILY MAN
8 102 DALMATIANS

Uniwide Metromall (Las Piñas) tel. 873.5606 loc. 1074
1 WATCH 3 MOVIE FOR ONLY P30.00
2 TALAHIB AT ROSAS
3 LITTLE HEROES IN CHINA
4 MEN
5
6

Uniwide Coastal Mall (Parañaque) tel 879.0001 loc. 2152
1 WATCH 3 MOVIE FOR ONLY P30.00
2 HAPDI SA TAG-INIT
3 BOYFRIEND KONG PARI
4 THUNDER MISSION

Center Plaza Cinema (Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 BOOBA
2 VERTICAL LIMIT

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC. tel 930.9515
1 HAPLOS
2 VIRGIN WIFE
3 LAKAS AT PAG IBIG

Spring (Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864
1 VIRGIN WIFE
A LAKAS AT PAG IBIG

JC Cinema (Parañaque) tel 825.8626
1 LAKAS AT PAG IBIG
3 SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS

GOTESCO CINEMA

City (Manila) tel 734.8568
1 (DOLBY) CAST AWAY
2 VIRGIN WIFE
3 LAKAS AT PAG IBIG
4 BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO
5 NURSE BETTY
6 HAPLOS
7 (DTS) FAMILY MAN
8 (SDDS) 102 DALMATIANS
9 (DOLBY) VERTICAL LIMIT

Caloocan tel 362.3508
2 LAKAS AT PAG IBIG
3 SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
4 BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO
5
6

Grand Central (Caloocan) tel 364.3781
1 SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
2 BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO
3 LAKAS AT PAG IBIG
4 (SDDS) VIRGIN WIFE
5 FAMILY MAN
6 (DOLBY) 102 DALMATIANS
7 (DTS) CAST AWAY
8 IKA-7 GLORYA
9 VERTICAL LIMIT

Commonwealth tel 951.0083
1 (DTS) CAST AWAY
2 SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
3 102 DALMATIANS
4 BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO
5 (SDDS) VIRGIN WIFE
6 FAMILY MAN
7 (DOLBY) NURSE BETTY
8 LAKAS AT PAG IBIG

Ortigas tel 656.6795
1 VIRGIN WIFE
2 LAKAS AT PAG IBIG
3 (DTS) SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
4 CAST AWAY
5 (SDDS) 102 DALMATIANS
6 (DOLBY) BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO
7 (DOLBY) FAMILY MAN

Universal (Manila) tel 733.2470
1 BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO

Sampaquita (Cubao) tel 911.7888
1 SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS

Dilson (Manila) tel 734.7724
Dilson BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO
Lords SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
Jennet VIRGIN WIFE

MARKETPLACE Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
2 102 DALMATIANS
3 CAST AWAY
4 LAKAS AT PAG-IBIG

Prima (Pasig) tel 641.1215
1
3 HAPLOS

Super Cinerama (Manila) tel 733.4226 or 733.4238
1 CAST AWAY
2 SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
3 LAKAS AT PAG IBIG
4 BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO
5 FAMILY MAN

Divisoria Mall (Manila) tel 244.4560 or 244.4619
1 BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO
2 SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
3 LAKAS AT PAG IBIG
4 VIRGIN WIFE
5 IKA-7 GLORYA
6 VITAL PART

Baclaran LRT Cinema tel 512.0115 or 512.0116
1 SAYONG MGA HAPLOS
2 LAKAS AT PAG-IBIG
3 BALA KO ANG BAHALA SAYO

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall (Sta. Rosa Laguna) tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198
1 IKAPITONG GLORIA
2 102 DALMATIANS
3 (DTS) CAST AWAY

Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 CAST AWAY
2 (DTS) WHAT WOMEN WANT
3 (DOLBY) 102 DALMATIANS
4 VIRGIN WIFE

Lianas Cinema (Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) BALA KO ANG BAHALA SAYO
2 SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
3 LAKAS AT PAG IBIG
4 (DTS) CAST AWAY

Lianas MovieCity (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) 102 DALMATIANS
2 IKA-7 GLORYA
3 (DTS) CAST AWAY
4 VIRGIN WIFE
5 LAKAS AT PAG IBIG

Olivarez Tri-Cinema (Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883
1 CAST AWAY
2 102 DALMATIANS
3 IKA 7 GLORYA

Olivarez Los Baños tel (049) 536.5101
1 CAST AWAY
2 102 DALMATIANS
3 IKA 7 GLORYA

Olivarez Tagaytay tel (046) 413.0311
1 PROOF OF LIFE
2 VIRGIN WIFE
3 VITAL PARTS

Morales Cinema (Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736
1 102 DALMATIANS
2 CAST AWAY
3 WHAT WOMEN WANT

Sunshine (FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376
1 SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
2 LAKAS AT PAG IBIG
3 102 DALMATIANS
4 VIRGIN WIFE

Cabuyao (Laguna City) tel (049) 243.2783
1 (DTS) 102 DALMATIANS
2 (DTS) RESERVE

Fourstep (Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385
1 LAKAS AT PAG IBIG

Emperor (Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657
1 IKA-7 GLORYA
2 LAKAS AT PAG IBIG
3 VIRGIN WIFE

Fiesta World Mall (Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 IKA-7 GLORYA
2 THE CONTENDER
3 VERTICAL LIMIT
4 VIRGIN WIFE

Berma tel 879.2168
1
2

CitiMall (Parañaque) tel 820.7269
1 LAKAS AT PAG IBIG
2 SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
3 BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO
4 102 DALMATIANS

Jade Cinema (Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY EX) CAST AWAY
2 BOUNCE
3 PROOF OF LIFE
4 (DTS EX) VITAL PART

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

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CAST AWAY PG-13 • THE FAMILY MAN PG-13
FEBRUARY 14, 16 & 17

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② VERTICAL LIMIT
③ FAMILY MAN
④ NURSE BETTY
⑤ HAPLOS
⑥ BOUNCE
⑦ 102 DALMATIANS

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THX, DTS, SDDS, DOLBY DIGITAL soundsystem

IMUS (046)875-3838
① VERTICAL LIMIT
② NURSE BETTY
③ FAMILY MAN
④ CAST AWAY
⑤ HAPLOS
⑥ 102 DALMATIANS

BACOLOD (034)441-0463
① VERTICAL LIMIT
② BOOBA
③ CAST AWAY
④ RED PLANET
⑤ SUPER IDOL
⑥ DUDE, WHERE'S MY CAR

DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE
ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101

ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	VITAL PARTS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	CAST AWAY
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	102 DALMATIANS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	VERTICAL LIMIT
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	PROOF OF LIFE
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	NURSE BETTY
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	IKA-7 GLORYA
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
MIRAMAR	VIRGIN WIFE
ODEON	CAST AWAY
ODEON-2	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
ROBEN	VIRGIN WIFE
TANDEM-1	IKA PITONG GLORIA
TANDEM-2	VIRGIN WIFE
TIMES	SCARY MOVIE / MEN OF HONOR
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	ANAK NG YAKUSA
ACT-2	ANAK NG KANO
ACT-3	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
ACT-4	TURN ON
CORONET-2	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
QUEZON-1	VIRGIN WIFE
REMAR	VIRGIN WIFE
REMAR-2	LAKAS AT PAG IBIG
CUBAO	
OCEAN SUPERAMA	BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO
OCEAN CINEMA-A	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
OCEAN CINEMA-B	LAKAS AT PAG IBIG
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	VERTICAL LIMIT
CINEMA-2	102 DALMATIANS
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-54091 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
CINEMA-2	BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO
CINEMA-3	LAKAS AT PAG IBIG
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	VERTICAL LIMIT
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	VITAL PARTS
CINEMA-6	IKA-7 GLORYA
CINEMA-7	VIRGIN WIFE
CINEMA-8	WHAT WOMEN WANT
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	CAST AWAY
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	FAMILY MAN
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	102 DALMATIANS
CINEMA-12	NURSE BETTY
CINEMA-14	PROOF OF LIFE
CINEMA-15	BOUNCE
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
CINEMA-3	LAKAS AT PAG IBIG
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	BOUNCE
CINEMA-2	CAST AWAY
CINEMA-3	CAST AWAY
CINEMA-4	FAMILY MAN
CINEMA-5	FAMILY MAN
CINEMA-6	102 DALMATIANS

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THX It Will Change the Way You Hear and See Movies Forever
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CAST AWAY
Drama-Adventure-Romance
Tom Hank*Helen Hunt
(PG-13 RT-2:20)
February 16 - Friday
For updated movie schedule, please call up at Louie's THX Cinema at 7512010 loc. 110

PAY IT FORWARD
Kevin Spacey / Helen Hunt
opens Wednesday Feb. 21

Get a copy of the 3rd issue of Pelikula Now available at Louie's THXCinema
LRP Foundation Inc. *Louie's THX Cinema Bldg. *Mile Long Compound Amorsolo St. Makati City Tel No 751-20-10 • Fax 892-33-48 • www.louies thx.com.ph
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ENTERTAINMENT

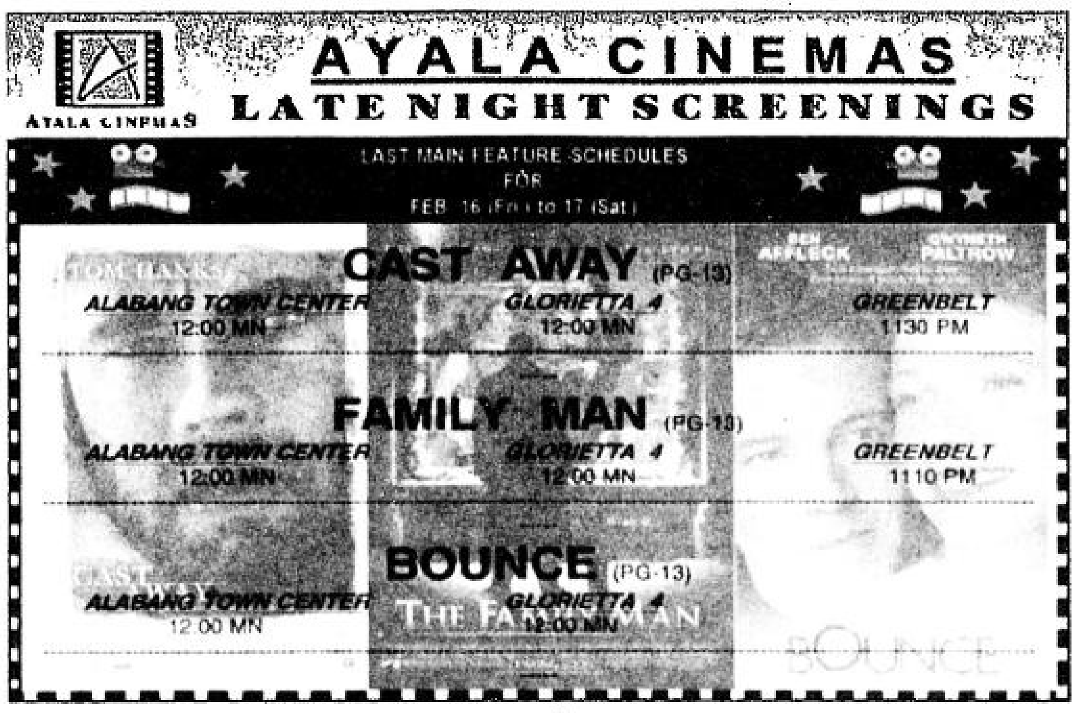
LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

CORY, MANNY AND JOKER IN 'KRIS'
Former President Corazon Aquino recently marked her birthday with a special appearance on her daughter's "Today with Kris," together with former Speaker Manny Villar and Makati Rep. Joker Arroyo. Boy Abunda helped Kris Aquino with the hosting chores.

KRIS AND TELL

Kris Aquino

KRIS Aquino's "Kris and Tell" column will be back on Monday.



AYALA CINEMAS
LATE NIGHT SCREENINGS
LAST MAIN FEATURE SCHEDULES FOR FEB. 16 (Fri) to 17 (Sat)

CAST AWAY (PG-13)	ALABANG TOWN CENTER 12:00 MN	GLORIETTA 4 12:00 MN	GREENBELT 1130 PM
FAMILY MAN (PG-13)	ALABANG TOWN CENTER 12:00 MN	GLORIETTA 4 12:00 MN	GREENBELT 1110 PM
BOUNCE (PG-13)	ALABANG TOWN CENTER 12:00 MN	GLORIETTA 4 12:00 MN	

THEY'RE BACK! AND THEY'RE MORE!
3RD 'SPOT-ON FUN FOR ALL AGES' DAY!
MTRCB RATING G General Patronage | ALL AGES ADMITTED
Dog Angeles Times
"...'102 DALMATIANS IS A CHARMER..."
Boston Herald - Stephen Schaefer
"...CLOSE IS MESMERIZING."
Philadelphia Daily News - Malcolm Ritter
GLENN CLOSE
102 DALMATIANS
Distributed by BUENA VISTA INTERNATIONAL thru COLUMBIA PICTURES

Japanese music at CCP

KAZE, a Japanese folk music ensemble, performs at 7:30 tonight at the Tanghalang Aurelio Tolentino of the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

Kaze pursues a traditional style that at the same time transcends the image generally associated with classical folk songs.

Kaze's members went through specialized training, including the study of the *tsugaru shamisen*, an instrument used in one of the best-known forms of Japanese folk music.

Their music appeals even to people unfamiliar with the traditional Japanese performing arts.

Zsa Zsa, Lani at Glorietta 4 Park

LANI Misalucha and Zsa Zsa Padilla perform at the Glorietta 4 Park today and tomorrow.

Lani enchants the Glorietta 4 crowd today with a live band in a show directed by Marc Lopez. And tomorrow, it is Zsa Zsa's turn to enthrall, with a band under the musical direction of Louie Ocampo.

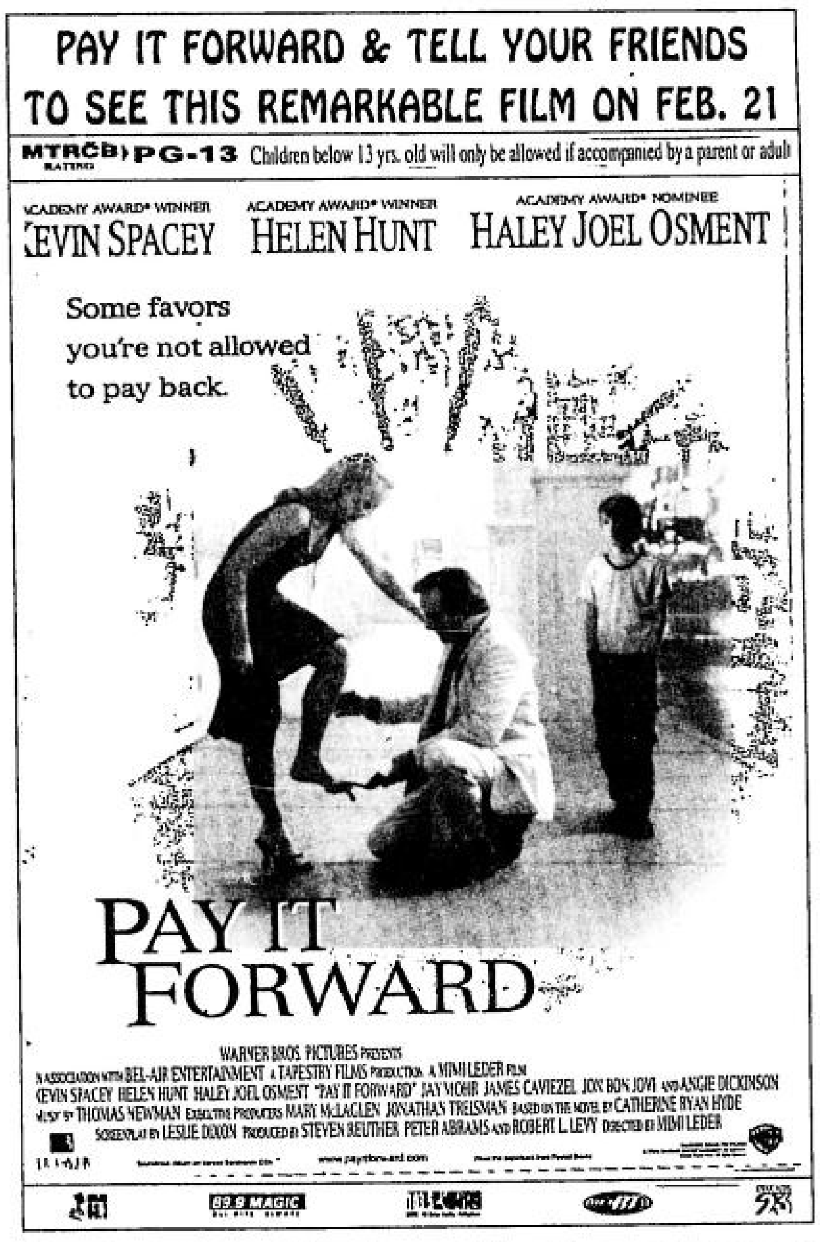
The back-to-back Valentine treat is entertainment courtesy of the Ayala Mall Events.

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL

BOUNCE - P13 1:15, 3:30, 5:45, 8:00, 10;15	CAST AWAY - P 13 11:40, 2:30, 5:20, 8:10, 11:00	CAST AWAY - P 13 1:30, 4:20, 7:10, 10:00
FAMILY MAN - P 13 11:40, 2:15, 4:50, 7;25, 10;00	FAMILY MAN - P 13 12:40, 3:15, 5:50, 8:25, 11;00	102 DALMATIANS-G 12:45, 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:45

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON TO FRI.

SECOND WEEK!
MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
"★★★★ Ryan and Crowe SIZZLE onscreen!"
"A SLICK THRILLER." -David Ansen, NEWSWEEK
"A thriller that sweeps us into a world of undercover professionals!"
Gene Shalit, TODAY SHOW
"THE ACTION IS HOT." Russell Crowe is the new James Bond.
-Jack Mathews, NEW YORK DAILY NEWS
"A DYNAMIC and INTELLIGENT thriller directed at a brain-spinning pace."
Gene Shalit, TODAY SHOW
MEG RYAN | RUSSELL CROWE
A TAYLOR HACKFORD FILM
PROOF OF LIFE
CASTLE ROCK ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS IN ASSOCIATION WITH BEL-AIR ENTERTAINMENT AN ANVIL FILMS PRODUCTION A TAYLOR HACKFORD FILM MEG RYAN RUSSELL CROWE "PROOF OF LIFE" DAVID MORSE PAMELA REED AND DAVID CARUSO DANNY ELFMAN BRUNO RUBEO STEVEN REUTHER TONY GILROY TAYLOR HACKFORD AND CHARLES MULVEHILL TONY GILROY TAYLOR HACKFORD



PAY IT FORWARD & TELL YOUR FRIENDS TO SEE THIS REMARKABLE FILM ON FEB. 21
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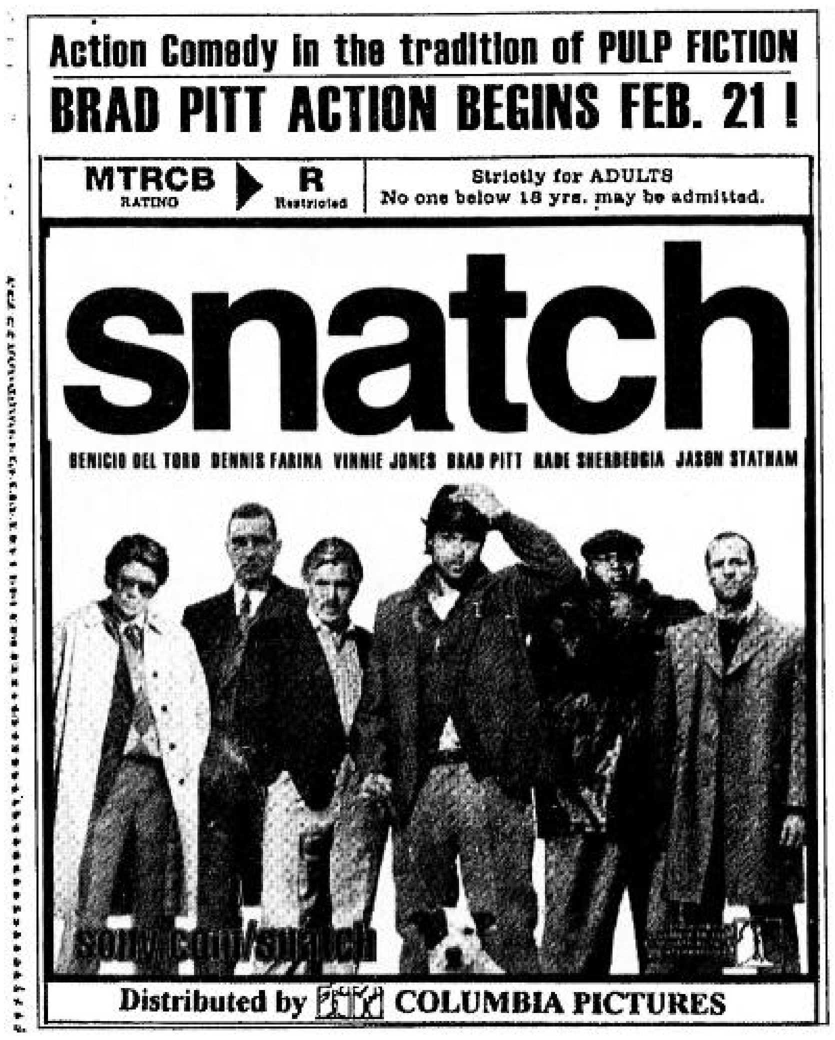
ACADEMY AWARD® WINNER KEVIN SPACEY ACADEMY AWARD® WINNER HELEN HUNT ACADEMY AWARD® NOMINEE HALEY JOEL OSMENT
Some favors you're not allowed to pay back.
PAY IT FORWARD
WARNER BROS. PICTURES PRESENTS IN ASSOCIATION WITH BEL-AIR ENTERTAINMENT A TAPESTRY FILMS PRODUCTION A MIMI LEDER FILM KEVIN SPACEY HELEN HUNT HALEY JOEL OSMENT "PAY IT FORWARD" JAY MOHR JAMES CAVIEZEL JON BON JOVI AND ANGIE DICKINSON MUSIC BY THOMAS NEWMAN EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS MARY McLAGLEN JONATHAN TREISMAN BASED ON THE NOVEL BY CATHERINE RYAN HYDE SCREENPLAY BY LESLIE DIXON PRODUCED BY STEVEN REUTHER PETER ABRAMS AND ROBERT L. LEVY DIRECTED BY MIMI LEDER
www.payitforward.com
89.9 MAGIC



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sony.com/snatch
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Bonnie Churchill, NATIONAL NEWS SYNDICATE
"THRILLING! It's top-tier movie escapism."
Peter Travers, ROLLING STONE
"ABSOLUTELY THE BEST ACTION FILM OF THE YEAR!"
Ted Dawson, KICU-TV
CHRIS O'DONNELL BILL PAXTON ROBIN TUNNEY SCOTT GLENN
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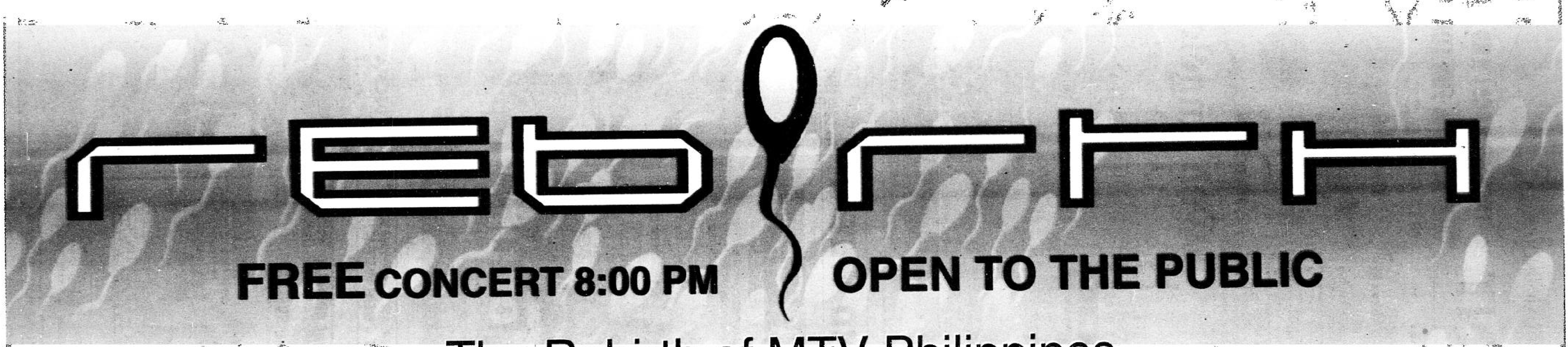

FREE CONCERT 8:00 PM **OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

The Rebirth of MTV Philippines

Launch Concert on Feb. 17 @ Fort Bonifacio, Global City, Taguig

Performing Artists:

Barbie's Cradle Brownbeat All Star Cynthia Alexander The Dawn Eraserheads Kaya Lani Misalucha Parokya Ni Edgar Passage Pops Fernandez Razorback Rivermaya Sandwich Side A Slapshock Teeth Wolfgang +

Collective Soul & Plus One

Hosted By: VJs Donita, Belinda, KC & Sarah

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RCBC firms up bid to buy Equitable

By Doris C. Dumlao
and Elena Torrijos

RIZAL Commercial Banking Corp., the banking arm of the Yuchengco group, has tied up with foreign banks Sanwa Bank of Japan and Banco Santander of Spain in its bid to acquire the Equitable PCI Banking group.

Well-placed Inquirer sources said yesterday that the Equitable PCI Bank shareholders and the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas were set to decide within the next few days the sale of majority stake in the bank to a new investor.

Banking sources said the family of taipan George Go was pushing through with the sale of a majority stake in the bank and was now evaluating the bids submitted by different groups, including that of RCBC. The board of Equitable PCI Bank was set to meet on Tuesday with financial advisers JP Morgan and ING Barings to evaluate the proposals.

Equitable PCI Bank, the country's third biggest lender, has a book value of close to $1 billion.

The sources said banking giants Bank of the Philippine Islands and Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co. were also keen on Equitable Bank but had attached too many conditions on their proposals. BPI and Metrobank, which are both still currently consolidating big acquisitions, were reportedly not as aggressive as RCBC in working out the Equitable Bank deal.

On the other hand, the sources said RCBC had taken in foreign strategic partners to give it the financial muscle in gaining majority control of Equitable PCI Bank. If RCBC succeeds in its bid, Sanwa and Santander would take a minority position in the merged RCBC-Equitable PCI Bank.

Sanwa already has an existing minority stake in RCBC. On the other hand, Banco Santander has an existing subsidiary in the country but sources said its local operations would not be folded into RCBC even if the Equitable PCI Bank deal proves successful.

Now the eighth biggest bank in the country with total resources of P131.3 billion, RCBC will catapult its ranking to No. 2 if it succeeds in taking over majority control of Equitable PCI Bank. A merger between RCBC and Equitable PCI would result in an entity with assets of P423.8 billion.

The sources also said the BSP had a big say on the choice of a white knight for Equitable PCI because it had extended billions of pesos in cash advances to the latter at the height of the bank run triggered by former Equitable chair George Go's alleged involvement in the money laundering of then President Estrada.

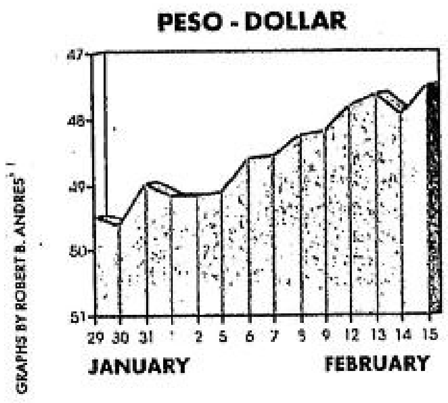
When Estrada was ousted from office last month, the Go family started to rethink its plan to sell the bank, but sources said the BSP preferred that a new investor take over Equitable PCI Bank.

Go already resigned as chair of Equitable PCI Bank late last year to spare the bank from unfavorable public sentiment arising from his much-publicized friendship with the impeached president, who was later on ousted amid accusations of receiving multimillion payoffs from illegal gambling.

Go owns a 34-percent direct stake and another 5 to 10 percent indirect stake in Equitable PCI Bank while his strategic partners, government pension funds Social Security System and Government Service Insurance System, own a joint 25-percent stake.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



Peso-Dollar Rate

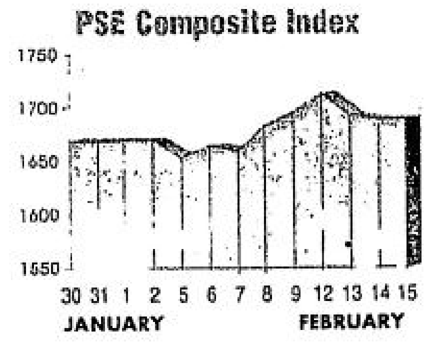
₱47.49 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Feb. 15, 2001

¥116.34 = $1
The US dollar was trading at 116.34 as of 5 p.m., Feb. 15, 2001

GOLD:$259.60/260.10
per ounce Hong Kong, Feb. 15, 2001

STOCK MARKET

Stocks prices up slightly



(See stock market report on Page B4)

STOCK prices ended barely higher yesterday in the absence of trading leads, dealers said.

The Philippine Stock Exchange benchmark index rose 0.31 points to 1,688.05.

Volume was down at 572.22 million shares worth P533.43 million from Wednesday's 848.18 million shares worth P622.43 million.

Many investors have opted to stay on the sidelines while waiting for a

STOCKS/ B8

Bangko Sentral says no rate cut this week

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday said it probably would not lower interest rates at its weekly meeting today as it waits for another cut by the US Federal Reserve.

"We have to wait for the Fed's move," Rafael Buenaventura, the Bangko Sentral governor, told reporters. "Anyway, we have moved our (rates) back to pre-crisis levels."

The central bank last week cut its key overnight borrowing rate by half a percentage point to 11 percent, and lowered the lending rate to 13.25 percent.

Policy-makers have cut rates four percentage points since December, undoing a four-point increase in October, when corruption charges against former President Joseph Estrada pushed the peso to a then-record. Estrada was ousted last month and replaced by Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Buenaventura has said the Philippines should not cut rates much faster than the US, since that could prompt investors to shift assets out of the country. The Fed cut its rates one percentage point last month.

Following two half-percentage-point reductions in interest rates last month, Fed Chair Alan Greenspan's latest comments about the American economy suggested the central bank was ready to cut rates again to encourage investment and shore up confidence. Still, further reductions may be few and smaller.

Further rate cuts might be limited because economic growth might soon rebound, said Joel Naroff, president of Naroff Economic Advisors in Holland, Pennsylvania. "The key point is: We're going to be cautious going forward in determining the extent of this slowdown," Naroff said. *With Inquirer wire reports*

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AWARD-WINNING COFFEE TABLE BOOKS

Publisher builds business from handshake

BY TINA ARCEO-DUMLAO

MARLENE Aguilar's good friend, artist Rafael Cusi, said in a conversation in January 1997 he would have to get his paintings published if he stood any chance of building a bigger name for himself in the art community.

Although she did not know the first thing about the publishing industry other than reading a good number of books, she calmly asked her friend to shake her hand because she would get that book published.

SUCCESS STORY

By the end of that year, the first coffee table book of Jacoby Publishing, entitled "Philippine Coral Reefs," was brought into the market. It was a very timely offering as 1997 was declared "Year of the Coral Reefs" by the United Nations.

"I knew nothing about the publishing industry. No one taught me how to do it, but because I am a survivor, I got all the scraps of information I needed from many different people to know everything about it. It was very challenging," Aguilar said.

She personally talked to layout artists, writers and photographers. She said she used the coffee table entitled "The Pearl Road" as a guide on what she wanted the book to look like. She contacted the printer in Hong Kong who helped her know more about the technical side of book publishing.

"My partner, Larry Bortles, really helped me set up the publishing house. He taught me the Harvard style of structuring a business," Aguilar said.

This was one of the reasons behind her decision to distribute her books not only through local stores, but also through Internet retailer Amazon.com to make the book available to book lovers abroad. It was a good move, she said, as foreigners turned out to be avid fans of coffee table books compared to local enthusiasts.

Awards, recognitions

Her painstaking efforts to get the book published did not go unnoticed. The book garnered an "Art for Environment" award from the European Center for Environment Arts, and Cusi got a separate award in recognition of his paintings on the coral reefs and marine life.

"I believe that it was awarded because it showed all the love and effort that went into the work. I really felt I was doing something good because I wanted Filipinos and the rest of the world to see the beauty of our coral reefs. Not all of them would be able to actually see the underwater world but they can see it through the book," Aguilar explained.

She felt so much fulfillment in publishing the first book that she immediately followed it up with a book in 1999 entitled "Fine Artists of the Philippines." The book featured quality art works by Filipino masters.

Just like the first book, her second offering was nominated for an award, this time by the Hong Kong printers group. She is proud of the nomination as the Hong Kong printers publish books from all over the world.

Robbing the truth

Her latest book is the first volume on "Philippine Myths and Legends" published late last year. The compilation of myths and legends sought to revive interest in folklore and literature that were with us even before the Spaniards came.

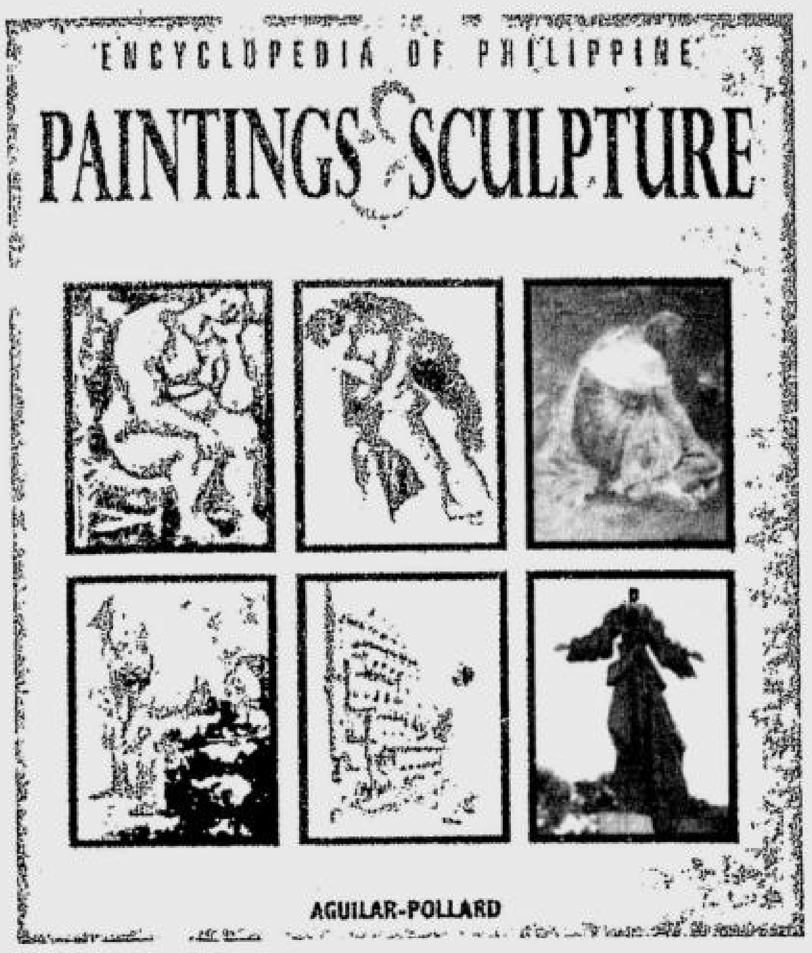
"If we allow these stories to disappear, not only do we deprive ourselves, but we also rob our children and the next generations of the truth. The Philippines had its own rich culture and heritage until the Spaniards came to steal our land, enslave our people and damage our culture," Aguilar said in the introduction to the book.

She said she had set her sights on coming out with a five-volume masterpiece as a testimony to the rich and diverse source of local myths and legends from Luzon to Mindanao.

Also set for release this year is an encyclopedia of Philippine paintings and sculpture which would feature works of Filipino artists from the 17th century to the present.

She said she deliberately chose these projects because she wanted books that would help build a sense of identity for the Filipinos. She felt disheartened by the fact that Filipinos tended to feel inferior toward foreigners in general and Caucasians in particular, which should not be the case.

"I am doing these books as a gift to children. I would like to think that I am contributing to the natural course of healing—of building our sense of identity by showing the beauty of our country through these books," Aguilar said.



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PREDATORY PRICING

Small oil players slam 'Big 3'

BY CHRISTINE A. GAYLICAN

SMALL petroleum players are slapping predatory pricing charges against the country's "Big Three."

The New Petroleum Players Association of the Philippines and the LPG Association Inc. have accused Petron Corp., Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. and Caltex Philippines Inc. of pulling down the prices of liquefied petroleum gas.

Filpride Resources Inc. president Ramon Villavicencio said Petron, Shell and Caltex should be raising their LPG prices by at least 50 centavos per kilogram considering higher LPG prices abroad.

This is equivalent to an additional P16.50 for every 11-kilogram cylinder, which currently averages P265 to P270.

Villavicencio claimed these three firms were selling below their variable LPG costs to squeeze new oil players like Filpride out of the market.

A ranking Petron official said Petron, Shell and Caltex could afford to maintain their LPG prices because they produce half of their requirements and were not dependent on imports.

Contract prices of LPG in the world market have risen to $332.50 per metric ton this month from $296.50 per metric ton in July last year—the last time local LPG prices were adjusted—due to higher demand.

New oil players are particularly feeling the pressure to raise their prices because they import most of their LPG requirements.

"The new players will definitely need an increase as they import most of the LPG they sold. There has been a $36 increase in the prices of LPG in the international market," Philippine Institute of Petroleum Inc. executive director Reynaldo Marquez said.

Demand for feedstock—raw materials used in plastic products, such as LPG—in Asia has grown, pushing up LPG prices in the region. Winter demand for heating fuel also rose in China and South Asia, Marquez said.

The Philippine Institute of Petroleum Inc. reported that domestic consumption of LPG rose by 4 percent last year, although demand fell by 6 percent.

BIR reviews Napocor taxes

BY CHRISTINE A. GAYLICAN

INTERNAL revenue officials have suspended state-run National Power Corp.'s fuel supply auctions to determine whether these transactions should be tax exempt.

Napocor was set to auction this week some P10.9 billion worth of fuel supply contracts but was instructed to suspend the bidding by the Bureau of Internal Revenue

Appointees of the new administration to the BIR want to review Napocor's tax-exempt privileges.

The Macapagal administration is trying to raise its tax collections this year to plug holes that have been causing the budget deficit to swell. Economists estimate the deficit this year may hit P200 billion.

Napocor is a prime target because it enjoys some P300 million to P600 million in tax exemptions annually.

The oil industry deregulation law provides that "for as long as Napocor enjoys exemptions from taxes and duties on petroleum products purchased for power generation, the exemption shall apply to purchases through a local refiner and to the importation of fuel oil and diesel."

A 1987 board resolution issued by the Department of Finance, which supervises the BIR, determined that as a government-owned and -controlled corporation, "Napocor is exempt from paying taxes and duties on its petroleum purchases."

The government has slapped a 3-percent tariff equivalent to 29 to 30 centavos a liter on imported crude and refined petroleum. It also imposes a specific tax of about 63 centavos a liter for every liter of diesel sold.

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IN THE MATTER OF :
GLOBAL BUSINESS BANK, INC. : Registration of Securities
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x---x

ORDER

Upon consideration of the Registration Statement and other papers and documents attached thereto which was filed for and on behalf of **GLOBAL BUSINESS BANK, INC.**, the Commission resolved to render effective the same for the registration of the company's stock rights offering, the period for which is set on February 12-16, 2001.

Let this Order be published at the expense of the corporation once in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines within ten (10) days from date hereof. The corporation is hereby directed to furnish the Commission with a copy of the affidavit of publication of this Order.

SO ORDERED.

EDSA, Mandaluyong City, Philippines, February 9, 2001.

JUSTINA F. CALLANGAN
Director

Falling skies

COCKTALES

By Victor C. Agustin

BAYANTEL'S $480-million and Maynilad's $350-million debt problems have apparently been impacting on their sister companies as well.

With the parent company Benpres weighed down by default prospects, services of subsidiaries Sky Internet and Sky Cable's have deteriorated in reverse proportion to the increased aggressiveness of their collection agents.

For example, Sky Internet subscribers who log in during peak office hours oftentimes could not get through US-based websites.

Yesterday, Sky Cable video signals in Makati and Loyola Heights were so snow-flecked and the audio so raspy that it was better to unhook the cable and reinstall the rabbit antenna for clearer reception of the free TV channels.

Oh, yes, even the ABS-CBN news staff are complaining about their Bayantel landlines needing something short of a miracle for their calls to get through and connect with Smart cell phones.

Expectorations

SIX senatorial candidates in the LDP-NPC lineup are said to be the deep-throat candidates of Jose Velarde.

For shorthand, the six are referred to by a rather gross acronym, PHLEGM, referring to Puno, Honasan, Lacson, Enrile, Gng. Loi, and Miriam.

Fair-weather friends

THE JAIME Dichaves nominees in the Philcomsat/POTC board, whose core group is led by a family of tax-dodgers and Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, have struck up a strange alliance with Honorio Poblador III.

Strange since the group ousted Poblador as Philcomsat president in the not-so recent past over bad investments that cost Philcomsat hundreds of millions.

Reason for the new alliance?

Poblador is riding high these days on account of his being a classmate of a certain Mike Arroyo.

New editorial direction

THE NEW GMA appointees at the sequestered Journal Group of publications, led by president Philip King (of Belman Laboratories, not of Anito/Victoria, fame), are set to take an across-the-board 10-percent cut in salaries to show the rank and file that management is serious about getting the publication's finances in order.

Short takes

- MTV Philippines, the local edition of the popular MTV music channel now produced by Nation Broadcasting Corp., will be formally launched tomorrow night at The Fort with a slew of local and foreign bands and a dazzling fireworks show that have become a trademark of NBC CEO Francis Lumen.
- WALDO Flores, corporate secretary of Philippine National Bank during the Ramos administration, is back working for the government, this time no less than in Malacañang. His new title is senior deputy executive secretary.

Heard through the grapevine

WHO is this new GSIS official whose first order of business is to ask the government to shoulder his hotel bills in Ayala Center's Oakwood Apartments?

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

IFC official to visit RP, launch new joint venture

AS PART of a seven-nation trip to East Asia, IFC executive vice president Peter Woicke will be in the Philippines from Feb. 18 to 20, visiting Cebu and Manila.

In Cebu, Woicke will visit the manufacturing facilities of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) engaged in furniture export. IFC is looking to support these SMEs through Avalon Professional Web Trade (APW), a Singapore-based trading company that sources purchase orders for home furnishings from international buyers and subcontracts production to SMEs that form part of its network in Cebu. APW is unique in that it makes available uncollateralized working capital finance and uses the Internet to provide marketing, logistics, and production planning services to SMEs.

In Manila, Woicke will meet with key representatives of the government and private sector to get a better understanding of priorities and issues affecting private sector development.

He will also announce IFC's first investment in a microfinance institution in the country, Micro Enterprise Bank of the Philippines (MEP), based in Davao.

MEP is being set up in partnership with Planters Development Bank, German-based companies Internationale Projekt Consult and IMI (International Mikro Investitionen), and Dutch institutions FMO (Nederlandse Financierings-Maatschappij Voor Ontwikkelingslanden N.V.), and the Doen Foundation.

IFC has a total portfolio of $675 million in the Philippines, representing the corporation's eleventh largest country exposure worldwide. IFC has been active in the Philippines since 1963 and, in the last three years, has approved investments of $280 million in 14 projects.

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Maybank inaugurates relocated Tondo branch

MAYBANK Philippines inaugurates its relocated branch in Tondo, with rites attended by key officers of Maybank as well as city officials and branch customers. The relocation capped Maybank's bid to strengthen its presence in this area and is part of the bank's thrust to identify and relocate to strategic areas convenient to and close to its customers. The Tondo branch has its new location at the corner of Herbosa and Sioco Streets. Its new premises is foreseen to provide a more conducive environment for banking and enhance Maybank's service delivery to its clientele. The branch is located in a building erected by Maybank, affirming again its commitment to local development for the long term, Branch Manager Michael Singson said "this milestone for the branch highlights Maybank's commitment not only to have a significant presence in strategic areas but also to its fundamental belief to be close to its customers." Tondo's branch manager also expressed Maybank's readiness "to be a partner of the community and take on its role as a banking service-provider in this part of Tondo."

The Tondo branch is among Maybank's 24 branches in Metro Manila. With its more than 50 branches nationwide. Maybank is the first 100 percent-owned foreign commercial bank to have the most extensive reach.

Maybank Philippines is a member of the Maybank Group, Malaysia's largest bank, ranked among the top 20 banks in Asia and among the top 150 in the world. It has more than 300 branches in Malaysia as well as operations in 13 countries. Maybank's host of financial services includes commercial and merchant banking, investment banking, corporate finance, and insurance. It also offers Internet banking and brokerages. It is also poised to offer new and innovative products and financial services as it is backed by over US$34 billion in assets and a network among the major financial centers worldwide.

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Jollibee seen posting lower revenues

JOLLIBEE Foods Corp., which sells one of every two fast-food hamburgers eaten in the Philippines, is counting on customers like Josephine Joval to boost earnings this year.

"It's more affordable than eating at other food chains," said Joval, 29, a saleswoman who eats at Jollibee at least four times a week. Her favorite: fried chicken with rice and pepper gravy for less than P50.

For Jollibee, whose bumble bee logo is as familiar in the Philippines as the yellow arches of Mcdonald's Corp., there just weren't enough customers like Joval last year. The nation's largest fast-food chain is likely to say today that net income slipped 4 percent last year, analysts said.

Jollibee is one of the few fast-food chains in the world that has held its ground against McDonald's in its home market, catering to the distinctive taste of Filipinos by selling hamburgers that come with a special-formula sweet sauce and menus heavy on rice.

Nonetheless, consumers probably spent less last year on Jollibee's spaghetti, Chinese noodles and hamburgers with pineapple slices as a political storm over the leadership of President Estrada crimped consumer spending. The leadership paralysis caused by Estrada's corruption scandal is blamed, in part, for economic growth that was among the slowest in Asia last year at 3.9 percent.

Jollibee probably earned P952 million last year, according to 19 analysts surveyed by Ibes International Inc.

That's down from the P991 million, excluding one-time items, that Jollibee earned last year. Earnings are forecast to rise to P1.05 billion this year, the survey showed.

Consumers may have bought more hamburgers and chicken meals, which beat rivals such as McDonald's and Burger King on price. At the same time, they probably purchased fewer chop suey and pizza meals at Jollibee's more expensive Chowking and Greenwich restaurants.

"Anything with rice is considered a meal," said Martin Enrile, an analyst at ATR-Kim Eng Securities Inc. "Pizza and pasta are not. They're considered snacks."

Jollibee probably suffered, too, from the weaker peso, which fell 20 percent at the height of the Estrada scandal and made Australian beef and US potatoes more expensive. The currency advantage of its 25 outlets overseas, in such countries as the US and Hong Kong, isn't expected to outweigh the higher cost of imported raw ingredients.

Still, investors are optimistic that a new government led by President Macapagal-Arroyo will revitalize the economy and get consumers spending again. Ms Macapagal, a trained economist, has pledged to trim the budget deficit as part of an effort to encourage growth.

"It was very difficult last year, and it should be better this year," said Edison Yap, a fund manager at the trust department of Equitable PCI Bank, whose P40 billion in assets include Jollibee shares. "This change in administration should help the company."

Bloomberg

RFM, Purefoods net income up

RFM Corp., the country's second largest food and beverage company, said profit in 2000 rose nearly sevenfold as declining finance charges offset slow sales.

RFM earned a net income of P96 million last year, compared with P14 million in 1999, the company said in a statement to regulators.

Revenue, which almost remained unchanged at P16.6 billion, was offset by a 73-percent decline in finance charges to P150 million. RFM's cost of goods sold also barely changed at P12.8 billion.

The company earlier said it earned P109 million in the nine months to Sept. 30, indicating it probably lost P13 million in the fourth quarter. RFM lost P115 million in the last three months of 1999.

Meantime, Pure Foods Corp. said net income last year surged 22 percent as it sold more hotdogs, ham and dressed chicken.

Net income in 2000 rose to P888.4 million from P727.8 million in 1999, the company said in a statement.

Rising sales of processed meats, poultry and feeds boosted Pure Foods' consolidated net sales 19 percent to P12.6 billion, the company said.

Pure Foods operates its processed meats division jointly with Hormel Foods International, an affiliate of the US maker of Spam.

Ayala Corp., Pure Foods' parent, recently said it was in talks with several potential buyers to sell its stake in Pure Foods to concentrate on property development, banking and telecommunications.

Bloomberg

Gokongwei firms report higher profits

ROBINSONS Land Corp., the property unit of diversified JG Summit Holdings Corp., said first quarter profit was P282.9 million, 40 percent more than the same period in 1999.

Robinsons Land, a shopping mall and hotel operator, said sales during the three months through December rose 27 percent to P894.6 million. Expenses were P513 million.

The company, the Philippines' second largest mall operator, is expanding its network of shopping malls and retail centers in Manila and other areas.

Another Gokongwei firm, Universal Robina Corp., the country's largest producer of snack food, said it earned a net income of P344.9 million in the three months to Dec. 31, 2000, selling more candies and snacks.

The company didn't give comparative figures. The results indicate net income rose 12.5 percent from P306.7 million in the same period in 1999.

Universal Robina, a unit of JG Summit Holdings Inc., said revenue rose 28 percent to P4.6 billion. Expenses for the three months to Dec. 31, 2000 totaled P3.2 billion.

Universal Robina, which makes snacks from corn and candies, extended its range of products as part of its push to expand in the region. In April, the company acquired affiliates in Thailand, Malaysia and China, boosting annual sales by $50 million.

Bloomberg

Metrobank profit falls to ₱1.15B

METROPOLITAN Bank and Trust Co.'s net income fell by two-thirds to P1.15 billion in 2000 as merger costs caused the nation's No. 2 bank to miss all its profit targets.

Metrobank forecast a 2000 profit of P5 billion early last year. It later pared the estimate to P3.5 billion, raised it again and pared it back a second time.

The bank didn't give a 1999 comparison yesterday, though in that year it said it earned P3.13 billion.

In April, Metrobank completed the purchase of Solidbank Corp., a smaller lender. Global Business Bank, its commercial bank unit, earlier merged with AsianBank Corp. and Philippine Banking Corp.

"They incurred more expenses to retire people and consolidate branches as part of the streamlining of their operations," said Emilio Neri, analyst at Abacus Securities Corp.

The bank's net income implied a loss of P650 million in the fourth quarter.

Metrobank said interest income was P25.6 billion in 2000, while interest expenses amounted to P17.9 billion.

The bank originally reported a 1999 net income of P4.05 billion, though it later cut this to P3.13 billion to reflect additional provisioning for bad loans.

The bank's auditor also said the bank's 1999 net income would only be P197.2 million if it followed generally accepted accounting principles and deducted loan-loss allowances from operating income instead of charging them against retained earnings.

Bloomberg

No. 1 in Executive Education in Asia, 1999

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Year 2001

Program Date

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101st Basic Management Program — Mar 12 - 30
102nd Basic Management Program — May 28 - Jun 15
103rd Basic Management Program — Aug 13 - 31
104th Basic Management Program — Nov 5 - 23
58th Management Development Program — Jun 4 - Jul 13
59th Management Development Program — Sep 17 - Oct 26
AIM CEO Forum (Top Management Program) — May 18 - 26

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

11th Marketing Strategy Course — May 7 - 18
12th Marketing Strategy Course — Oct 15 - 26
3rd Managing Family Corporation — Apr 2 - 6
4th Managing Family Corporation — Nov 5 - 9
2nd Service Marketing — Apr 2 - 6
3rd Negotiation — Apr 23 - 27
Finance for Senior Bank Managers — Jun 25 - Jul 13
2nd Strategic Human Resources Management — Jul 20 - Aug 3
2nd Systems Thinking — Jul 16 - 20
3rd Systems Thinking — Oct 22 - 26
Advanced Insurance Management Course — Aug 20 - Sep 7
Course for Senior Bank Managers — Sep 3 - 21
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DISCLOSURES

THE BOARD of **Sun Life Financial Services of Canada Inc.** declared a quarterly dividend of C$0.12 on its common shares, payable on March 31 to shareholders of record as of Feb. 26.

* * *

PUREFOODS Corp. said that discussions in reference to its alleged sale are being conducted by **Ayala Corp.** and its management is not in any way involved therein.

* * *

THE BOARD of **House of Investments Inc.** approved to sell 20 percent of its investment in **First Malayan Leasing and Finance Corp.**

* * *

THE LISTING of 666,666 common shares of **Cosmos Bottling Corp.**, covering stock certificate numbers 36673, is set for today. This brings the number of common stocks to a total of 548,553,792 common shares.

* * *

MUSIC Corp. announced that one of its investee companies, **Music.Com Inc.**, has recently entered into a 50/50 joint venture agreement with **Milor Entertainment Group** in the United States. Under the terms of agreement, the two companies will work together to create and publish Music.com magazine.

* * *

LAWYER Elsa Divinagracia was appointed as assistant corporate secretary of **Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.** effective immediately.

* * *

ALBERTO Romulo has resigned from the board of **Metro Pacific Corp.** in view of his appointment as secretary of finance.

* * *

THE BOARD of **Pilipino Telephone Corp.** postponed its annual stockholders' meeting scheduled on March 28. It was reset, based on its by-laws, to April 18. ***Compiled by Armin P. Adina, PDI Research***

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Thursday, February 15, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1	17,000
Banco Filipino Sav & Mort	120	120	120	120	280,450
Bank of the Phil. Islands	70	70.5	69.5	69.5	90,100
China Banking Corp.	700	700	700	700	20
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	55	58.5	55	58.5	514,400
Global Business Bank Inc.	62.5	70	62.5	67.5	532,400
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	232	234	230	233	36,750
Prudential Bank	470	470	470	470	3,020
Philippine National Bank	35.5	35.5	35.5	35.5	65,700
Rizal Comm'l Bkg Corp. A	27.5	28.5	27.5	28.5	18,300
Union Bank Of The Phil.	29	29.5	28.5	28.5	66,100
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	260,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1250	1250	1225	1245	1,020
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1070	1070	1060	1065	11,920
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	50	50	49.5	49.5	89,900
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.74	0.75	0.74	0.74	1,630,000
Easycall Phils. Inc.-Com	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	705	725	705	715	760
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.0575	0.0575	0.055	0.055	8,500,000
Piltel	0.89	0.89	0.86	0.86	140,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	90,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	870	875	865	865	57,480
Ivantage Corp.	1.1	1.24	1.1	1.2	10,410,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.0825	0.085	0.08	0.0825	172,800,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	55	55	54.5	54.5	24,100
Manila Electric Co. B	62.5	62.5	61.5	61.5	868,900
Petron Corp.	2	2	2	2	1,728,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.06	1.1	1	1.1	20,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	1.44	1.44	1.4	1.42	3,909,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.55	0.57	0.55	0.56	190,000
Negros Navigation Co. Inc.	0.21	0.215	0.21	0.215	300,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Alsons Cement Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	10,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.54	0.54	0.54	0.54	630,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	200,000
Republic Cement Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	10,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	10,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.86	0.87	0.86	0.86	10,240,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.12	2.12	2.12	2.12	8,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	2.85	2.85	2.8	2.8	77,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	11	11.5	11	11.25	1,176,500
La Tondena DistillersInc.	39	39	38.5	38.5	106,500
Pancake House Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	5,000
RFM Corp.	1.38	1.38	1.3	1.32	5,458,000
San Miguel Corp. A	50	51	50	51	158,700
San Miguel Corp. B	63	63	62	62	86,300
Vitarich Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.57	0.58	0.57	0.58	110,000
Ayala Corp.	8.3	8.3	8.2	8.2	194,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.2	0.2	200,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	12	12.25	12	12.25	1,800
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	46,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.31	90,000
APC Group Inc.	0.26	0.3	0.25	0.29	29,050,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	2,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	255,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	2	2	2	2	20,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	30,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc	11.75	12.25	11.75	12.25	6,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.25	430,000
Benpres Holdings Corp	3.15	3.2	3.15	3.15	1,279,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	100,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.57	0.57	0.55	0.55	530,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	50,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.05	0.055	0.05	0.05	2,200,000
Fil-Estate Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	5,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.4	1.44	1.38	1.44	3,495,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp	24.5	24.5	24.5	24.5	26,000
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	220,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	50,000
Ionics Inc.	14.5	14.5	14	14	175,300
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2.9	3	2.9	3	813,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	2,600,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.95	0.95	0.94	0.95	3,520,000
Magnum Holdings Inc.	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.38	0.41	0.38	0.41	110,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.66	0.67	0.65	0.65	4,540,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.79	0.79	0.76	0.78	1,010,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.42	0.44	0.42	0.43	20,550,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	110,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.3	0.3	14,290,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Active Alliance Inc.	0.54	0.54	0.54	0.54	20,000
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.42	1.42	1.42	1.42	5,000
Matsushita Elec Phil Corp.	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	4,000
Macondray Plastics Inc.	7.7	7.7	7.4	7.6	50,000
Music Corp.	3.3	3.55	3.3	3.45	2,093,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.84	0.85	0.84	0.84	450,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	800,000
Reynolds Philippine Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	270,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	11.5	11.5	11.25	11.5	331,600
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.65	0.72	0.65	0.68	8,550,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.79	0.79	0.74	0.74	6,790,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.73	0.74	0.7	0.71	1,770,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	100,000
Philippine Racing Club	4.3	4.4	4.3	4.4	20,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	50.5	50.5	50.5	50.5	630,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.- Pref.	510	510	510	510	200
Equitable PCI Bank-War	3.5	4	3.5	4	1,247,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	116,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series R	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
Waterfront Phils-Warrant	0.08	0.08	0.0725	0.0725	300,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.7	6.8	6.7	6.8	9,206,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	100,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.34	0.34	2,290,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	100,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.44	0.45	3,880,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.75	2.75	2.7	2.75	4,096,000
Gotesco Land Inc.B	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.045	1,000,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.21	0.215	0.21	0.215	690,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	220,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.145	0.145	0.13	0.13	1,650,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2.12	2.12	2.12	2.12	40,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	70,000
SM Development Corp.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	30,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.1	7.2	7.1	7.2	2,479,000
Universal Rightfield Prop	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	1,200,000
Urbancorp Realty Dev. Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	200,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc B	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	12,000,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	3.35	3.35	3.35	3.35	7,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	790,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	15,000,000
Omico Corporation	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	37,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	10,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	10,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	150,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.029	0.029	0.029	0.029	6,300,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	120,000
Pacifica	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	4,900,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.11	0.13	0.11	0.12	19,000,000
South China Resources Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	20,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	510,000

CURRENCIES

Feb. 15, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.088969	1.000000	47.5830
Japan	Yen	0.009354	0.008590	0.4087
United Kingdom	Pound	1.586410	1.456800	69.3189
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.139617	0.128210	6.1006
Switzerland	Franc	0.652155	0.598874	28.4962
Canada	Dollar	0.712583	0.654365	31.1366
Singapore	Dollar	0.624408	0.573394	27.2838
Australia	Dollar	0.575961	0.528905	25.1669
Bahrain	Dinar	2.888665	2.652661	126.2216
Kuwait	Dinar	N/A	N/A	N/A
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.290368	0.266645	12.6878
Brunei	Dollar	0.622623	0.571755	27.2058
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000114	0.000105	0.0050
Thailand	Baht	0.025707	0.023607	1.1233
UAE	Dirham	0.296520	0.272294	12.9566
Korea	Won	0.000871	0.000800	0.0381
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.918300	43.6955
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.469519	22.3411
France	Franc	0.152450	0.139994	6.6613
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.416706	19.8281
Austria	Schilling	0.072672	0.066735	3.1755
Belgium	Franc	0.024789	0.022764	1.0832
Italy	Lire	0.000516	0.000474	0.0226
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.154447	7.3491
Portugal	Escudo	0.004987	0.00458	0.2179
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005519	0.2626
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024789	0.022764	1.0832
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.166	55.4818

₱1.25B EARMARKED

Marsman expanding banana plantation

BY GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.

THE MARSMAN-DRYSDALE group is investing P1.25 billion to expand its production of bananas by 50 percent to meet robust demand for chemical-free bananas overseas.

Group chair and CEO George Marsman-Drysdale said the company would increase by 1,000 hectares its total farm area this year to meet the projected 20-percent growth in demand for bananas in major export markets. The group produces one of the highest per hectare yields in the industry.

The increase in farm size would boost the group's banana production from 12 million boxes to 18 million boxes a year starting next year. Its main markets are Japan, Middle East, China and South Korea.

Marsman-Drysdale is considered as one of the largest organic grower of bananas in the world. The group formed the Marsman-Drysdale Organic Farms Inc. which is the first and only organic farm in the Philippines which currently produces chemical-free Cavendish bananas.

Drysdale said the company was also looking into forming joint ventures with other companies to further expand its output. The company currently produces bananas and asparagus in Mindanao and mangoes in Guimaras Island. It also produces *papaya* and *okra*.

The group currently has 3,000 hectares of land planted to bananas, 400 hectares planted to asparagus, and 250 hectares planted to mango. The group is one of only two major producers of asparagus in the country.

The government has been pushing for the development of agriculture in the past few years in order to boost dollar earnings and reduce the country's dependence on semiconductor exports. The agriculture sector grew by 6.6 percent in 1999 and 3.1 percent last year which was unprecedented in a sector whose historic growth rates have been pegged at an average of 1.3 percent.

Meantime, Marsman-Drysdale Agricultural Group donated part of its plantation to 756 farm workers under the direct-land-transfer scheme of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program.

The beneficiaries, grouped into a cooperative, are employees and workers at the Marsman plantation.

Under a memorandum of agreement governing the land transfer, the beneficiaries agreed to allow Marsman-Drysdale to continue to use the property in the next 30 years.

The agreement also provided that each beneficiary is entitled to at least a hectare, which will be annotated at the back of his/her Certificate of Land Ownership Award.

"Under this scheme, the management practically gives up the land for free, but it is allowed free use of the land as a consolation for a certain period of time; while the beneficiaries maintain their employment status with the firm for the entire duration of the agreement," an official of the Department of Agriculture said earlier.

NEW THAI PM

New Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra presents a gift to presidential daughter Luli Macapagal-Arroyo who accompanied (from left) Philippine Ambassador Clemente Mariano and Special Presidential Envoy Roberto R. Romulo in delivering to the Thai PM a personal congratulatory letter from President Macapagal-Arroyo. They were the first delegation to greet the PM in his first day in office.

Ka Popoy and Ka Lando

LABOR MANAGEMENT FORUM

Josephus B. Jimenez

RECORDED in the annals of Philippine labor-management relations are various killings involving both business managers and labor leaders. Still fresh in the minds of many were the slayings of a Nestle executive in the 1970s and the unsolved murder of a Kawasaki plant manager late last year. It is unfortunate that the relationship between labor and capital should result in the shedding of human blood. The new administration of President GMA is marred by the killing of a prominent labor leader, Filemon "Ka Popoy" Lagman.

The death of a trade union leader in the treacherous hands of an assassin saddens and angers the Filipino workers. Such a heinous crime should alarm the business sector and the government as well. It should cause the entire nation to pause and reflect deeply on the implication of such an unfortunate event just immediately after the Edsa hysteria.

Before Edsa I, Ka Lando Olalia was slain. After Edsa II, Ka Popoy Lagman was killed. Both were labor leaders, freedom fighters, pro-people, and anti-oppression, anti-injustice. They were like Ninoy Aquino, whose blood added fuel to the anger of the Filipinos culminating in the ouster of a dictator; Evelio Javier who died for the cause of freedom; Lean Alejandro and scores of others who lost their lives to make life more livable for us. It is sickening that the killers of Ka Lando and Ka Popoy are still free. More than the killing itself, the slow grind of justice can be fatal.

Ka Lando was a lawyer defending the Filipino workers, mostly members of KMU (Kilusang Mayo Uno). Ka Popoy was a staunch organizer of the oppressed, be they urban poor or peasants, farmers or factory workers, squatters or ejected tenants. Sanlakas was a result of his efforts and talents in organizing the marginalized sectors of the society. Ka Lando and Ka Popoy were both fighting for justice and freedom. Their deaths are a big blow to all patriotic Filipinos

Alarming to business

Ka Popoy's murder gravely saddens the workers, especially the BMP, but it is the business sector that should be alarmed because the backlash of this tragic event is beyond calculation.

When the masses are angry, industrial peace will again be disrupted. There could be a resurgence of strikes, mass rallies, demonstrations and other forms of concerted actions. The efforts to rebuild the economy after Edsa II could be derailed again and our attention could be distracted by the upsurge of militancy and labor activism.

It is not impossible to expect that some well-meaning partisans of Ka Popoy may attribute, even without admissible evidence, the crime to certain capitalists who might have been hurt by the late labor leaders' aggressive union actions. It is not farfetched to imagine that the grieving family may think that the death could be traced to a labor or industrial dispute. And this should worry the businessmen concerned because retaliation is a cultural phenomenon in this country, given our historical trends of settling blood debts not by parliamentary struggles but by the barrel of a gun.

Disturbing to the labor sector

The unions and the union leaders should also be worried. In the light of intense inter-union rivalries, even the politics between BMP and KMU as well as their conflicts with TUCP and FFW and the scores of other trade union centers and labor federations, various theories can be formulated, although unfairly, linking opposing camps to the cold-blooded murder.

Personally, we don't believe that a comrade in arms in the labor movement is capable of doing precisely that, but police and NBI operatives may theorize that in the realm of heated passions, men driven by lust for power and greed may be motivated to kill. Thus, the death of Ka Popoy can unduly exacerbate the tensions among various trade unions. In view of this, it may be opportune for all labor leaders regardless of affiliation to issue a joint manifesto condemning the slaying of Ka Popoy. At least, the labor leaders can be united in a time of misery and grief.

Serious concerns for GMA

The newly installed government of President GMA should face the greatest quantum of worries. For the matter may be blamed upon the military or the police. As usual, the uniformed elements of the government face the unfair accusation of responsibility, if not for the murder itself, and for the delays in the identification, arrest and prosecution of the murderers.

After the so-called Gloria hysteria in Edsa II, where everybody was full of hopes, passions and dynamism, here comes the spoiler, the murder of a well-loved and well-respected leader whose groups were visible in Edsa and whose support for the ouster of the former President was uncompromising and relentless.

Doubts on Erap too

The surveyors of political intrigues may attribute the slaying of Ka Popoy to the military officers who are still loyal to Erap as the ultimate form of sabotage against the GMA administration. Again, such a hasty charge may be baseless but one can never discount the creativity of certain people.

Since Erap's desperate moves to cling on to power do not find the affirmation by both the Supreme Court and the Ombudsman, it can be imagined that his boys may resort to dirty tactics to alienate GMA from the ranks of the progressive labor sector.

We all suffer

In the end, all of us, as a nation, will suffer. What we gained in Edsa, which merited an applause from all over the world, may be lost due to a couple of bullets pumped into the head of Ka Popoy. Whoever did that treacherous murder was certainly an enemy of the people. In one instant, he destroyed what we all fought for. He should come out and answer to all of us.

Indeed, the history of the Filipinos' struggle for peace, justice and freedom is written in blood and the lives of Ka Popoy and Ka Lando are now in communion with the martyrs and heroes who all died so that we can better live our lives.

Vehicle industry urged to implement reforms

THE ADOPTION of the Asean Free Trade Area-Common Effective Preferential Tariff (Afta-CEPT) in Southeast Asia will compel the local automotive industry to institute radical reforms in order to survive the increased competition brought by a more liberalized market.

This was the contention of Rafaelita Aldaba, a research associate at the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS), in her paper "Implementing the Afta-CEPT Scheme: Will the Philippine Automotive Industry Survive?"

Aldaba pointed out that the adoption of the Afta-CEPT scheme posed both risks and opportunities. It would result in a very low and almost uniform tariff structure ranging from zero to 5 percent, thus, reducing the effective protection on the automobile industry. Likewise, it will allow the entry of relatively cheaper imports which will further heighten the competition in the industry. Aldaba acknowledged that the implementation of the Afta-CEPT would benefit consumers since greater competition will bring wider choices for vehicle models and cost advantages.

Given these prospects, Aldaba urged the local automobile industry to improve its competitiveness, particularly in the absence of government protection. This would require improvements in efficiency and productivity of both domestic assemblers and parts manufacturers. Automotive companies, she said, should also reduce their production costs to put them at par with the costs and quality of their counterparts abroad.

Aldaba added that the local automotive assembly industry also needed to export successfully. But looking at the export data of the industry in recent years, it is obvious that the Philippines has been lagging behind its neighbors in Southeast Asia. In 1998, the local automotive industry was able to export only 406 vehicles, while exports of automotive firms in Indonesia for the same period stood at 8,458 units. Thailand took the lead with 71,549 units followed by Malaysia with 20,761.

Meanwhile, Aldaba said the government has an important role in securing the future structure of the local automotive industry. The government, according to her, must provide a stable industry policy so that the companies can set their targets and plan their investments in the light of market opportunities. Recent inconsistencies in the implementation of the rules on SKD importation as well as on excise taxes must be immediately corrected and avoided in the future. She also urged the government to continue its plan to reduce tariff protection and to remove the local content program in order to create a competitive domestic market. She explained that these would pressure domestic firms to improve their performance, reduce costs and increase productivity. Aldaba warned that delaying the reforms would simply delay the realization of potential benefits.

At the same time, Aldaba advised the parts and components sector, which is dominated by small and medium enterprises (SMEs), to abandon their "mom-and-pop" style of operations. She emphasized that while SMEs' access to capital and technology is crucial to their development, this does not justify the continuation of the local content program. Aldaba noted that this program, which requires assembly firms to use 40 percent domestic parts, has failed in the past to promote the growth and development of SMEs. She argued that regardless of the local content requirement, domestic assemblers would source their parts and components locally as long as the prices and quality of these are at par with their imported counterparts.

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REZ GOPEZ-SINDAC, Editor

Smart offers mobile discount coupons

ACCESSING discount coupons is now part of the Smart WAP (Wireless Application Protocol) service.

Smart Communications Inc., in cooperation with the First Promotions and Marketing Services Inc., is now offering the first electronic mobile savings coupons through Instasavings.com, the country's first and only online and offline consumer's savings website that can be accessed through WAP.

Instasavings.com gathers a myriad of discounts, freebies and promos under one site, www.instasavings.com. This website can be clicked on Smart WAP phones for instant savings anywhere, anytime of the day.

Coupons can even be printed out and distributed to friends and relatives and then presented for redemption at the respective establishments.

"Instasavings will help the Filipino save money. Through their Smart WAP phones, consumers can avail of instant discounts anytime they want. For the merchants, the WAP site is a cost-effective and non-traditional medium for sales and advertising with a massive reach," said Jerome Almirante, Smart marketing manager for mobile value-added services.

To use the Instasavings.com discounts, subscribers must first access the Smart WAP site, then click on the link in Discount Coupons. Upon entering the Instasavings WAP site, subscriber chooses the location (Luzon, Metro Manila, Visayas and Mindanao) and the respective city (Manila, Quezon City, Cebu, Davao etc.)

The subscriber then clicks on the category that he/she wants to have a discount on: restaurants, personal care, hotel, computer, florist etc.

After the subscriber has chosen a category, Instasavings WAP site downloads a detailed listing of the merchants in that category (e.g. Restaurants = Don Henrico's, Café Rizal, Promdi Deli etc. The chosen merchant will reflect the merchant name, address, telephone number and the discount or promo link.

All the subscriber has to do then is to let the merchant see the coupon and subscriber will then be given the discount or the corresponding promo on the item.

www.instasavings.co
The First ELECTRONIC Mobile Coupons

SEALING the Smart-FPMS agreement signing are (seated, from left) Jerome Almirante, Smart marketing manager for mobile value-added services and Rikki Ishak, (FPMS) president and CEO. Witnessing the ceremony are Jayvee Salvador, Smart assistant product manager and Ajie Ishak, FPMS VP and CFO.

OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR

Dr. Zenaida L. Cruz, author of tourism textbooks and a tourism professor of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (left) received the Outstanding Educator – Partner in the New Millennium Award given by the Entrepreneur/Consumer Post at the Manila Midtown Hotel recently. With her is Nita Lozana, the presentor of the award.

Review classes at CAP College

CAP College Foundation Inc. is offering various review classes as part of its growing course listing, adding to the existing undergraduate and graduate programs on one of the country's pioneers in distance learning.

Review sessions on Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS) and National Commission on Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN) will tackle Nursing Process/Nurses Diagnosis Volume, Complete Physical Assessment Volume, Other Conditions Not Common Among Filipinos, Universal Precautions, Medico-Legal-Ethical Considerations, and Health Care Delivery System of the USA among others.

Lectures will be handled by masteral degree holders in nursing/specialists in CGFNS/NCLEX-RN. Classes will run for a month beginning March12, Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the 5th floor of CAP II Building, 149 Legaspi St., Legaspi Village, Makati City.

Also, three whole day sessions are scheduled for the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) course beginning March 13, followed by March 27-29, April 24-26, May 8-10 and May 23-25.

For the Test of Spoken English (TSE) on March 26, classes are slated March 6-8 (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.), April 16-18 (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) for the April 21 exam, May 2-4 (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) for the May 12 exam and May 28-30 (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) for the June 8 exam.

Both the TOEFL and TSE sessions will be held at the CAP Development Center, 7th floor of CAP Building, 126 Amorsolo St., Legaspi Village, Makati City.

For inquiries and reservations, visit CAP College or call 810-9142./812-6923/810-9130 or email at capcollege@cap.com.ph.

WRAPPER COLLECTION PROMO

A SHINING example of teamwork was displayed by this year's winners of the URC Biscuits' "Ready, Get Set, Collect 2" wrapper collection promo. The schools won an audio visual package, library package, home economics package, sports package, and the new technology package. Shown are (from left) second prize winner Culiat Elementary Math Club advisor Noel Favila, Culiat Elementary School principal Dr. Justina A. Farolan, assistant principal-Math head Irene Dizon, assistant to the principal–Filipino head Carmelita Salvaleon, URC promo assistant Philip Garin and Math teacher Aniceto Mawac.

DUSIT M4WD TAMIYA CUP LAUNCHED

The 11-leg Dusit M4WD Tamiya Cup was launched recently at the Dusit Poolside with a ceremonial race by its sponsors (from left) Gigi Rodriguez, Citibank N.A. AVP for marketing services; Shakespeare Chan, proprietor of official Tamiya products distributor, Lil's Futaba Hobby Center; Rodolfo Perez, director of battery production and sales of National Panasonic; and Richard Ortiz, president of the Philippine M4WD Racing Association.. Looking on are Dusit Hotel Nikko Manila's assistant director of food and beverage Albert Banaag and general manager Chiyuki Fujimoto. For inquiries and reservations on the race held every Sunday until April 8, 2001, please call 867-3333 ext. 3311-3315 or Lil's Futaba at 819-1646 and 633-6358.

Real estate developers mount scale models exhibit at BuildExpo 2001

A RARE exhibit on the latest housing concepts, through attractively designed scale models and particiapted in by subdivision, condominium and real estate developers will be held at the 11th Real Estate and Housing Exhibition in conjunction with BuildExpo 2001 starting Feb. 22 to 25, 2001 at the Megatrade Hall of SM Megamall.

In addition to the exhibit, a conference will be held for housing manufacturers, suppliers and building professionals in order to exchange vital information on the latest equipment, products and services relating to the construction, industry, the real estate and housing exhibition. Relevant information on current trends and the benefits of owning real estate properties, including various products and services fit for the new millennium and personal or corporate lifestyles will be on exhibit.

Construction and building equipment, materials, products and services; interior design and renovation products; computer hardware, software and accessories; automation, security and fire equipment; landscape will also be showcased.

Interested parties may call Strategic Planners Network at 551-4109 to 10 or at 0919-634-1534 or Arthur Diaz at 0917-399-8649.

SALE EXHIBIT

The Riverbank Mall in Marikina City is holding a sale exhibit at the Trade Hall until Feb. 17, 2001. Riverbank Events and Special Projects officer Anna Cruz (second from left) and leasing officer Christine Nemeses (third from left) pose after signing the contract for the event with Millennium Exhibit's proprietress Juliet D. Yu and Canticles proprietress Vangie Barazona who were awarded the area for the exhibit duration.

BITS & Clips

Executive protection forum

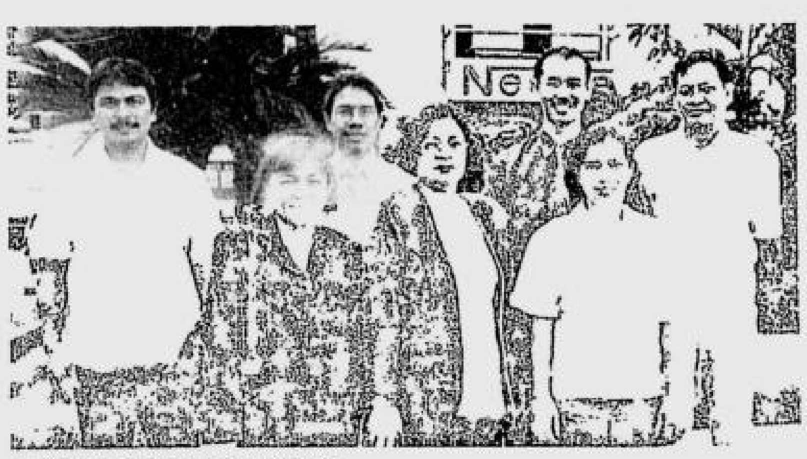
A FORUM on "Effective Protection for Executives and other VIPs," will be held on Feb. 21, 22 and 23, 2001 at Dusit Hotel Nikko, Makati City to update security officers on how to provide total protection to corporate executives and other VIPs. Ber Pacheco, president of Bonzer Business and Management Consultancy, forum organizer, said the program is designed to combat criminal activities. For more information, call 892-2561or 759-2064.

Scholastican production

LOVERS and madmen, kings and commoners, fairies and elves come alive as the Grade Six students of Scholastica's College, Manila present William Shakespeare's classic "A Midsummer Night's Dream." The mix of fantasy, romance and enchantment all blend into one delightful adventure as Prof. Naty Crame Rogers once again directs this Scholastican production on its 11th year. Watch and experience this magical dream on Feb. 21 to 24 at the St. Cecilia's Hall – Theater, SSC Manila. For more information, call 524-7686 to 89 and look for Myrna Cariaso.

AVID, RCPI SIGN ACCORD

Avid Sales Corporation, the country's leading proponent of the digital lifestyles, recently entered into a Payment Acceptance Agreement with telecommunications giant Radio Communications of the Philippines, Inc. (RCPI). Signing the contract are (seated, from left) Avid general manager Marcial Balgos, Avid president Susan Tan and RCPI senior vice president and head Gabriel Paredes. Witnessing the signing ceremony are Avid marketing manager Christiane Chan, Avid business development manager Trina Ycasiano, Avid senior business development assistant Clifford Mercado and RCPI area sales manager Charles Hain.



HALAL CERTIFICATION

Members of the Indonesian Council of Ulama recently conducted an Indonesian Halal Certification visit to the Alabang factory of Nestlé. The Council grants the Halal certification to products that comply with Islamic regulations for preparing food. Headed by Lukmanual Hakim, the group toured the Liquid Drinks and Beverages HTST lines.

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ROBINSONS SUPERMARKET'S GRAND DRAW PROMO

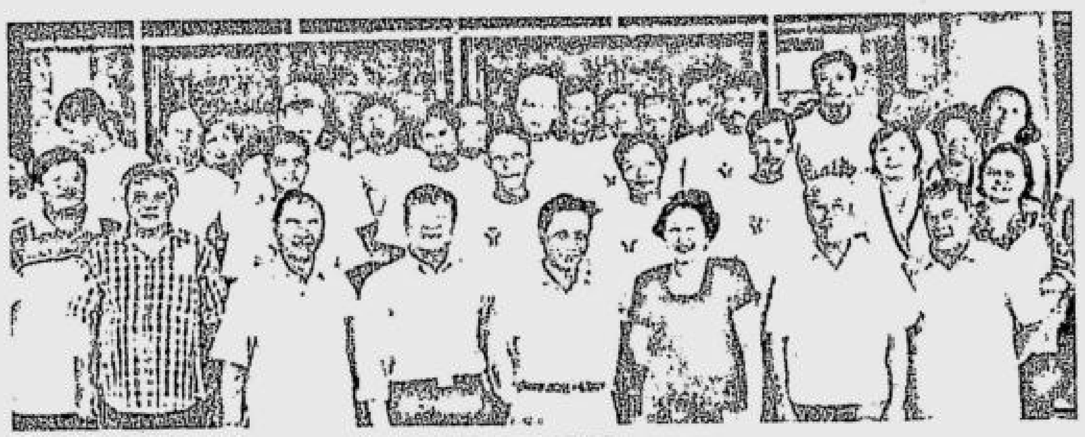
Jojo Dela Cruz of Abbot Laboratories Phils. (second from left) announces the lucky winners during the grand draw of Robinsons Supermarket's 12 MRGs (most request gifts) Christmas promo at the fountain area of Robinsons Galleria. With Dela Cruz are the event's hosts VJ Shannen Torres (left) and DJ Mo Twister (second from right) with Robinsons Supermarket-Galleria store manager Malou Torres and internal auditor Junes Importa.

ITESAP forum on e-PLDT

THE Integrated Telecommunication Suppliers Association of the Philippines (ITESAP) recently held a business forum on PLDT's e-PLDT and the Vitro Internet Data Center service solution at the Manila Room, Makati Shangri-La Hotel. Ariel Roda, e-PLDT's managing director conducted the presentation. Sponsors were Sun, Nokia, Alcatel and Cisco. ITESAP, the industry association of leading telecom suppliers and integrators has actively participated in the deregulation of the Philippine's telecoms market and the formulation of guidelines for the supply and interconnection of Customer-Premises-Equipment (CPE) together with the Philippine Electronics and Telecommunication Federation (PETEF) and the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC).

Colegio de San Agustin set alumni homecoming

THE COLEGIO de San Agustin Makati Alumni Association will hold its homecoming on Feb. 17, 5 p.m. at the Colegio de San Agustin, Makati Covered Courts. This year's theme is "Bak 2 d Republic of San Agustin." For more information, call Mrs. Tansingco at 844-2006.



N. SAMAR SCHOOL ON-AIR GRADUATES

A total of 141 farmer-enrollees from six municipalities of Northern Samar recently completed a three-month School On-The-Air program on Improved Rice Farming Systems sponsored by the Northern Samar provincial government over local radio station dySM. The program is part of the agricultural component of Project "Madeleine" of Gov. Madeleine Mendoza-Ong aimed at improving agricultural production, especially rice, in the province. Shown are some of the farmer-graduates during the closing ceremonies at the capitol with Gov. Ong (first row, third from right), Department of Agriculture assistant regional director Arsenio Fortin, who was guest speaker (fourth from right), Vice Governor Ramon C. Lubos (third from left), NIA provincial engineer Antolin Juego (second from left), board member Augusto Monfort (second from right) and provincial agriculturist Decoroso Asinas (extreme right).

Thailand faces new crisis without reforms

BANGKOK—Thailand faces an even bigger crisis than the 1997 meltdown if it fails to implement extensive reforms, Somkid Jatusripitak said in an interview yesterday as he prepared to be appointed finance minister.

Somkid, a close adviser to Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, told The Nation newspaper that his first priority would be to restore confidence in Thailand as it struggles to shake off the legacy of the regional turmoil.

"I want ultimately to use fiscal policy to reform the country and make its vital institutions—decayed ministries, education and manpower, small businesses, whatever they may be—stronger."

"If we don't do anything we will face an even bigger crisis than the one we have just experienced," he said.

Somkid expressed optimism that Thailand would earn the confidence of overseas investors by using the crisis "as an opportunity to strengthen the pillars of our nation."

After his expected swearing in as finance minister on Sunday, he said his first overseas trip would probably be to either Japan or China.

Somkid said the coalition government's unprecedented majority in the House of Representatives would ensure that its policies and reforms were implemented swiftly.

"The beauty of holding 300 or so seats in the House is that we can enact or amend laws quickly," he said in the exclusive interview.

He dismissed charges that the government will be unable to fund its lavish election promises, or afford a plan to take responsibility for the mountain of bad loans owed to banks. *AFP*

NAPSTER SHUTDOWN

Artists have mixed emotions

WASHINGTON—In the aftermath of a court ruling that could eventually shut down the music-swapping website Napster, the music community has been sounding off with both harmony and dissonance.

Despite the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals' Monday decision that Napster had violated copyright law by enabling Web surfers to share copyrighted music files, some fledgling bands were still singing Napster's praises.

"Napster was the first time the real power of the Internet emerged," said singer-guitarist Anthony Shaw of the band Monovox. "The words 'piracy' and 'thievery' got thrown around, but new doorways were opened."

"Napster is great for up-and-coming acts to promote new music and turn people on to music they wouldn't have listened to otherwise," he said.

"Instead of shutting it down, the industry should have learned to work with Napster. They can help each other," said singer Beth Musolff of the Milwaukee, Wisconsin-based band You're Pretty.

"People heard the music and liked it and went out and bought the album," she said.

But singer Kathy Fisher—whose eponymous band Fisher launched its career through the Web—said at a press conference just minutes after the ruling that she and her band "are a bit of a walking contradiction" because, although the band enjoyed making its music available online, it still wanted to control what was released.

"What made the Internet so wonderful for us," she said, "is that we used it as a marketing tool, as a way to reach out to existing fans and find new fans."

Fisher said her band had decided which songs it would post on the Internet.

"When Napster came along, it felt like someone had started making those decisions for us. It took the base of our marketing strategy away from us," she said.

However, even some already established bands—such as Limp Bizkit and the Dave Matthews Band—have used Napster as a conduit for getting their music to fans.

Napster co-sponsored Limp Bizkit's "Back to Basics" tour last summer, and Napster said the Dave Matthews Band gave its consent to post the new single, "I Did It," online, ahead of the Feb. 27 release of the band's album "Everyday."

Nonetheless, the heavy metal band Metallica, an ardent Napster foe that sued the site in April for copyright infringement, declared victory after the ruling.

"From day one, our fight has always been to protect the rights of artists who chose not to have their music exploited without consent," Metallica said on its website.

"The court's decision validates this right and confirms that Napster was wrong in taking not only Metallica's music but (that of) other artists who do not want to be a part of the Napster system and exploiting it without their approval."

Rhythm and blues legend Jerry Butler also applauded the court's decision at a press conference here, alongside officials and attorneys for the Recording Industry Association of America, a trade group that had joined the suit against Napster. *AFP*

Acer cuts 500 jobs as PC demand slows

HSINCHU, Taiwan—Acer Inc. said yesterday it sacked 500 workers, 7 percent of its domestic workforce, as Taiwan's biggest computer maker cut costs on slowing demand.

All the fired workers were Southeast Asians hired by Acer to fill low-paid assembly-line jobs shunned by Taiwanese. Acer hired a chartered aircraft yesterday to send home 130 Vietnamese, and plans to do the same with workers from Thailand and the Philippines.

"Slowing global computer demand produced excess labor capacity," said Acer spokesman Henry Wang. "We can't afford to have them sitting around doing nothing."

Wang declined to say how much the job cuts, reported earlier by the Taiwan News, would save the company. Acer employs 13,000 people worldwide.

Acer, once one of the world's seven largest personal computer makers, retreated from the retail business in the United States last year to focus on making computers for companies such as International Business Machines Corp. and selling under the Acer name in China.

Acer is shifting its computer assembly and component manufacturing to China and the Philippines, where production costs are lower. Acer plans to sign up 1,000 retail stores in China this year as local distributors.

China has attracted investments from nearly all of Taiwan's notebook computer makers, including Asustek Computer Inc., Compal Electronics Inc. and Quanta Computer Inc., which make components on the mainland while keeping Taiwan as their main operation and design base. *Bloomberg*

US opens new antitrust probe of Microsoft

WASHINGTON—Microsoft said Wednesday it was cooperating with a new US Justice Department antitrust probe of Microsoft over its investment in Canadian software maker Corel.

"There was a request for information from the Department of Justice on a transaction with Corel," company spokesperson Jim Cullinan said after the Wall Street Journal reported that a new probe had been opened.

"We are fully cooperating to provide them with the information they need and we believe there are no legal issues in our transaction with Corel that would raise concerns, but we look forward to providing the information to the government."

The Journal reported that Microsoft had been subpoenaed by officials to obtain documents about the $135-million investment in Corel, which is known for its WordPerfect and CorelDRAW programs that compete with Microsoft products.

Authorities are seeking to determine whether the move may pose antitrust concerns over office software packages, a market in which Microsoft holds a 90-percent stake with Microsoft Office, the daily said.

The Justice Department is also conducting a routine review of Microsoft's acquisition of Great Plains Software, saying it may pose fewer concerns because there is little overlap with Microsoft products in the business accounting software field.

Some observers suggest the new administration of George W. Bush may take a different approach than that of Bill Clinton, which successfully brought an antitrust case against Microsoft that is now being appealed. *AFP*

BMW says sales in Asia up 16%

SINGAPORE—Germany's BMW AG said Thursday sales in Asia rose 16 percent to 58,250 vehicles last year, boosting its market share in the region's luxury car segment to 28.4 percent.

Sales jumped 63 percent in the 10-country Asean bloc, more than twice the increase recorded by the total car market, it said in a statement.

Luder Paysen, senior vice president of BMW group sales, said the results were achieved on the back of a consistent commitment to Asia and 7.5 percent growth in the region's overall car market.

The statement said two new sales subsidiaries in Indonesia and the Philippines would start operating on April 1.

"We believe more than ever in the future of Asia," BMW board member Michael Ganal said in the statement. "We are convinced that the Asian markets are already making their comeback and will probably end up stronger than ever before."

Ganal said BMW sold a total of more than 822,000 cars worldwide last year, a 9-percent rise over 1999.

BMW plans to sell well over a million cars a year within a few years by pursuing its premium brand strategy, the company said. *Reuters*

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BAYANTEL DIVESTING

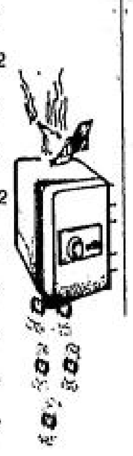
Extelcom reopens debt restructuring talks

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

Highest ten non-performing loan ratios among commercial banks* (4th quarter 2000)

Rank Q4	Rank Q3	Commercial Banks	NPL ratio (in %) Q4	NPL ratio (in %) Q3	NPL amount (in billion pesos) Q4	NPL amount (in billion pesos) Q3
1	1	United Overseas Bank	54.61	58.01	4.0	4.3
2	2	Philippine National Bank	39.00	39.00	39.6	42.2
3	5	TA Bank of the Philippines	28.29	24.40	0.3	0.3
4	4	Bank of Commerce	26.52	28.29	3.3	3.2
5	7	Landbank	24.47	21.19	29.5	27.2
6	3	Bangkok Bank	21.38	37.99	0.4	0.7
7	11	Allied Bank	20.56	18.04	9.5	8.8
8	6	Global Bank	20.50	21.62	7.2	7.1
9	9	Philippine Bank of Communications	19.75	19.01	5.1	4.9
10	10	Dao Heng Bank	19.63	18.69	0.7	0.7



* Does not include Al-Amanah Islamic Bank: NPL ratio = 31%; NPL amount=P 7.3 million
Source: Published statements of condition and BSP

For four straight quarters in 2000, United Overseas Bank registered the highest non-performing loan ratio among commercial banks. However, it managed to shed a little over 3 percentage points off its NPL ratio. Banks which had increased NPL amounts were TA Bank, Bank of Commerce, Landbank, Allied, Global and PBCom.

Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

By Anthony O. Alcantara

EXPRESS Telecommunications Philippines Inc. has resumed negotiations with its creditors for the restructuring of some P2 billion in debts.

Extelcom president Advinculo Quiblat said the company reopened talks with creditors early this month.

"We had to postpone talks because the interest rates and the peso exchange rates had been erratic in the last quarter of last year due to the country's political problems," he said.

The official said the restructuring talks would likely be finished by the middle of the year. About P1.3 billion of Extelcom's debts were owed to local creditors and the rest to foreign banks.

He added that Bayan Telecommunications Inc. might sell its 40-percent stake in Extelcom only after a debt restructuring agreement with creditors is finalized. He said the shareholder issue plaguing the management of Extelcom was part of the debt restructuring.

However, Rafael J. Uson, Bayantel corporate advertising manager and public relations head, said he could not make a comment on the issue yet as Bayantel itself has been deep into negotiations for the restructuring of its own debts amounting to $480 million.

The Lopez-owned Bayantel has written off its P6-billion investment in Extelcom because the venture did not fare well.

Extelcom, one of the pioneers in the local cellular phone industry, has lagged behind its competitors due to fierce competition as well as ownership problems involving its foreign investor, Luxembourg-based Millicom, which owns 47 percent of the company.

Bayantel has often disagreed with Millicom on various management and policy issues and has offered to purchase the shares held by Millicom to acquire control of Extelcom.

Millicom, however, declined to sell its stake in the company. Millicom has gained management control of Extelcom with the support of another shareholder, Mayon Holdings Inc. of the GMA-7 group.

Quiblat said the debt restructuring formed part of the planned transformation of the company which would also involve changes in the Extelcom's system of operations and the infusion of new investments.

The new investments, he said, would be needed to finance the company's plan to go digital.

Of the four other cellular phone companies operating in the country, Extelcom is the only one that still uses an outdated analog technology. It has, at present, a subscriber base of only 200,000.

Drilling of San Isidro well to resume

By Ronnel W. Domingo

AN ALL-FILIPINO oil exploration consortium expects to resume this month the drilling of an on-shore well in San Isidro town, northwest Leyte. The well is believed to have oil and natural gas deposits.

The consortium includes Alcorn Gold Resources, Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Development Corp. and PetroEnergy Resources.

"A new turnkey drilling contractor will be on the site by next week and they will probably start (drilling) after a few days," Benjamin S. Austria, Trans-Asia executive vice president, told the Inquirer in an interview.

Austria said the drilling of the well, called San Isidro SX-1, was originally scheduled for the second half of last year. However, it was postponed because the turnkey drilling contractor had problems in logistics, financing and management.

He said that previous studies made by the consortium have identified an active petroleum system in San Isidro. Hydrocarbons detected in the area indicated widespread oil and gas seeps and wells.

As technical operator of the project, Trans-Asia started the drilling in April last year. The well was expected to reach a depth of 1,030 meters.

The well reached 298 meters in July when problems set in causing the delay.

The drilling is a commitment of the consortium under Geophysical Survey and Exploration Contract No. 93. The GSEC covers a 1.4-million-hectare block in Eastern Visayas.

Trans-Asia also got promising results from specialized seismic studies on two prospects in the off-shore area of the block.

Austria said oil finds in the on-shore site could be used for commercial purposes while those from the off-shore site could serve non-commercial purposes.

Alcorn Gold has a 46.6-percent interest in the consortium. Trans-Asia has 33.3 percent while PetroEnergy has 20 percent.

GOINGS-ON

Asia's best telecom firm

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. has been named as Asia's best managed fixed line telecommunications company in an annual survey conducted by Euromoney, one of the world's leading financial magazines.

PLDT's subsidiary, Smart Communications, has also been recognized in the survey, taking fourth place in the keenly contested cellular telecommunications category.

The rankings of Asia's Best Managed Companies, now in their fifth year, are compiled from the votes of market analysts at major banks and research institutes worldwide.

Survey respondents were asked to nominate their top three companies in each of the countries and sectors they covered. Factors considered were market strength, profitability, growth potential and the quality of management and earnings.

Composting technology

A MEMORANDUM of Understanding (MOU) has been signed between Bedminster AB of Sweden, the world's biggest composting technology/equipment provider, and the Quezon Province for the construction of a 100 tpd Bedminster plant. The agreement was signed during the visit to Stockholm of Gov. Wilfredo Enverga and other governors of the Calabarzon last September.

Anders Bystrom, president of Bedminster AB, is a member of a Swedish delegation that is scheduled to visit Manila from Feb. 20-23 this year. Bystrom will also spearhead a talk on environmental composting technology on Feb. 22-23 at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel.

Bedminster AB is represented in the Philippines by Ekkson + Pacific Holdings Inc.

Cebu Pacific-Northwest tie up

CEBU Pacific yesterday announced its participation in Worldperks, the frequent-flyer program of Northwest Airlines, effective today.

The partnership between Cebu Pacific and Northwest Airlines allows all Worldperks members, including some 169,000 in the Philippines, to gain "miles" every time they fly Cebu Pacific. The mileage credits can be exchanged for free tickets of Cebu Pacific. With each Cebu Pacific flight, a Worldperks member earns a minimum of 250 miles.

Laurie Lofgren, Northwest's general manager in the Philippines, Guam and Micronesia, said: "Cebu Pacific is a wonderful addition to our growing list of partner airlines. This tie-up will be very beneficial to all Worldperks members as they will now have more holiday destinations to choose from as well as more opportunities to earn more miles toward free flights."

Stocks . . .

(From page B1)

clearer direction on government's economic programs, said Astro del Castillo of A and A Securities.

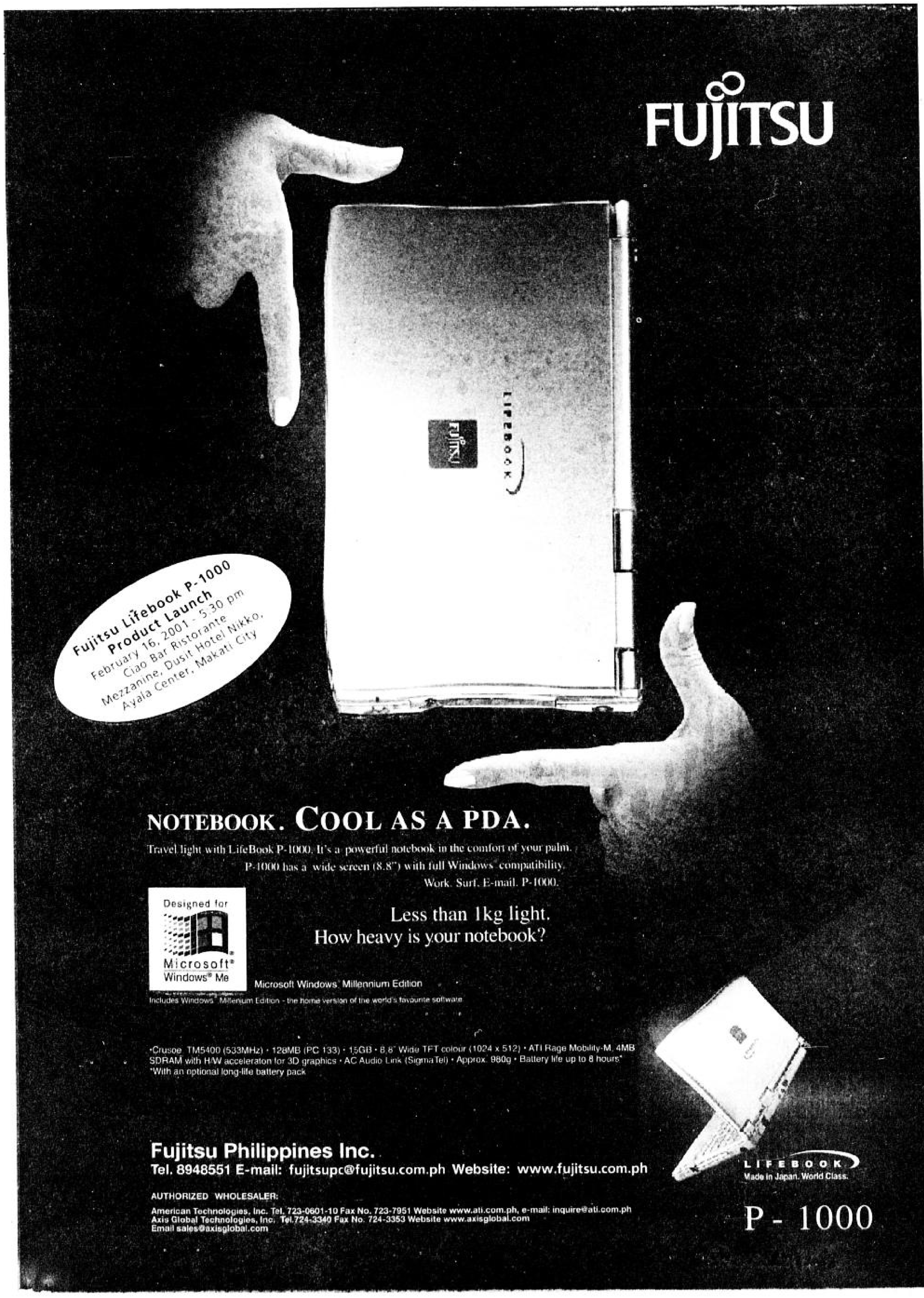
"If we see more concrete developments and programs of the government, the market will react favorably," he said.

"Investors want to find out if the government will really focus on its job to push the economy to a higher level despite the election fever," Del Castillo said.

Another factor that could dictate the market's movement in the short-term are developments leading up to the May national elections, when half of the 24-member Senate and all the 250 seats in the House of Representatives are to be contested.

"The trend is still more of a consolidation in general," added Henry Ong of KGI Securities.

Del Castillo said the recent batch of disappointing corporate results were shrugged off by the market because investors were bullish that the economic recovery expected this year will lead to improved earnings. AFP



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G7 IN PALERMO

Richest nations grapple with US slowdown

PARIS—Group of Seven finance ministers, joined for the first time by US Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill, are set to wrestle with the global impact of the US slowdown at a weekend meeting in Italy.

The one-day G7 gathering in Palermo, Sicily, would allow the world's biggest economic powers to get an understanding of the economic policies of US President George W. Bush, the hosts said.

"It is an opportunity to understand the direction of the Bush administration," said an official at the Italian treasury, which hosts the G7 finance meeting on Saturday, in the run-up to a July 20 to 22 G8 summit in Genoa.

US Federal Reserve Chair Alan Greenspan soothed some market fears with his statement to Congress on Tuesday that the world's biggest economy could quickly pull out of the doldrums.

It was in retrenchment, but not a recession, he told lawmakers.

But some European countries have already revised downwards their forecasts for economic growth in 2001.

The International Monetary Fund warned in Davos last month it would cut its 2001 world growth forecast to about 3.5 percent from the 4.2-percent figure announced in September.

O'Neill's judgement is thus keenly awaited by his colleagues.

The Euro group, bringing together the 12 euro zone nations' finance ministers, expected "a first contact with the Americans to better understand the current situation," said the group chairman, Belgian Finance Minister Didier Reynders, who will be in Sicily.

Ministers would also likely probe analysts' expectations of a US recovery in the second half of the year, he said this week.

The world's second biggest economy, Japan, will again be in the hot seat, said one European source.

"It is true that there is a feeling of disappointment among the other G7 members, but at the same time they are not as pessimistic as all that," the source said.

The Bank of Japan, led by governor Masaru Hayami, last week cut its largely symbolic discount rate for the first time since September 1995, to a record low 0.35 percent from 0.5 percent.

Hayami has insisted the nightmarish problems facing the Japanese economy after a decade-long slump result from structural deficiencies, which only the government can fix through accelerated reforms.

Russian Finance Minister Alexei Kudrin was also due to briefly join the G7 ministers, turning the meeting into a G8.

After fruitless attempts to ease its commitments, Russia abandoned hope Tuesday of restructuring its Soviet-era debts to the Paris Club of international creditors in 2001.

On Jan. 1, Russia's debt to the Paris Club stood at $48.3 billion, of which $38.7 billion are Soviet-era obligations. Moscow is due to repay some $3.5 billion of the Soviet debt this year.

Debt of the world's poorest countries will also be on the table. Italy was ready to call for writing off the debt of the poorest nations in a proposal that was well-advanced, the Italian treasury official said. *AFP*

BOJ should consider quantitative easing

TOKYO—The Bank of Japan should drop its habit of depending on short-term interest rates and consider quantitative easing measures to help Japan's fragile recovery, a former financial diplomat said on Thursday.

"The Bank of Japan must use all its available knowledge and resources to tackle the current environment. They shouldn't be convinced that they've exhausted all options," Makoto Utsumi, a former Japanese vice finance minister for international affairs, told Reuters in an interview.

His comments coincided with recent calls from both private and public sectors for the BOJ to take more drastic easing steps after the central bank cut its mainly symbolic official discount rate (ODR) to 0.35 percent from 0.5 percent on Friday.

At a meeting of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party's financial panel on Wednesday, some members voiced skepticism over the central bank's decision to lower the ODR and called on Governor Masaru Hayami to step down.

Utsumi gave the example of the US Federal Reserve and Germany's Bundesbank which monitor money supply and short-term interest rates like "two wheels of a car" in deciding monetary policy.

"The BOJ has traditionally looked only at short-term rates and disregarded quantitative gauges such as money supply. I find that hard to understand," he said. *Reuters*

Could US talk itself into recession?

WASHINGTON—With the US Federal Reserve fretting that a slump in confidence could tip the country into recession, top Bush administration officials are keeping up a drumbeat of nerve-racking warnings that the economy is in trouble.

Analysts say this raises the question of whether the country could talk itself into recession as the central bank and politicians pursue different agendas—one seeking to stabilize a shaky economy and the other camp bolstering its case for quick tax relief.

"Animal spirits are alive and well and they play a major role in how our economy works," said economist Mark Zandi of Economy.com in West Chester, Pennsylvania. "When you have policymakers talking the economy down, it certainly has an impact on people's behavior."

Fed Chair Alan Greenspan, testifying before Congress on Tuesday, said consumer confidence has fallen, so far not dangerously sharply, but warned that the potential for "an unpredictable rending of confidence" makes recessions difficult to forecast and hard to counter.

"When consumers become less secure in their jobs and finances, they retrench as well," Greenspan said—a serious development since spending drives two-thirds of national economic activity.

And at the same time the Fed chief was warning that a loss of confidence was like a breached dam that becomes a "torrent (that) carries with it most remnants of certainty and euphoria," President Bush was dismissing the latest favorable sign of economic activity.

Bush said a government report released on Tuesday showing retail sales picked up in January after a dismal December did not lessen the need for a proposed $1.6 trillion of tax cuts over the next decade.

"I think it's one good statistic amongst a sea of pretty dismal statistics," Bush said. "I'm concerned about the economy."

Two weeks ago, Vice President Dick Cheney said during a round of Sunday political talk shows that he was "gloomy" about the economy's prospects. Cheney described the economy as "right on the edge, where we've got zero real growth."

The White House is pulling out all stops to build momentum for its proposed tax cuts, which analysts say complicates Greenspan's job of managing an economy that clearly slowed late last year but is only a month shy of marking 10 full years of unbroken growth since the last recession in 1990-91.

"At the moment, we are not" in a recession, Greenspan said on Tuesday, adding "we should take whatever actions we can to reduce the probability that it will occur."

The Fed made a surprise half percentage point cut in US interest rates on Jan. 3, clearly aimed at bolstering confidence. That was followed up with a matching reduction on Jan. 31, when the Fed threw in a warning that consumer and business confidence had "eroded further" and required a "rapid and forceful response."

"You'd have to say Greenspan's life was being made more difficult by the Bush administration's tack right now on taxes," said Robert Dederick, economic consultant to Northern Trust Co. in Chicago.

Dederick said the Fed chief has an ally in Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill, who has taken a somewhat softer line while advocating tax reductions. O'Neill's position has been that "cutting income tax rates can help keep this downturn from taking root," but he has always described himself as optimistic about the economy's prospects.

"It's a delicate line that each one of them has to walk: O'Neill has to try not to be too pessimistic because he certainly doesn't want a recession, while Greenspan has to do what he can to keep confidence up," Dederick said. "It's simply a fact that each of them has separate agendas." *Reuters*

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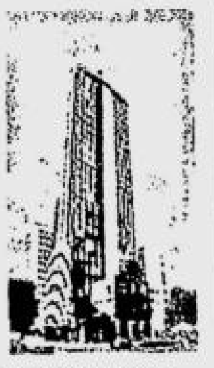

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nr GREENBELT 2br 130m^2 12M 4121825 09177914366

nr GREENBELT 3br 250m^2 25M 4121825 09177914366

Westgate Salcedo 1B 1CG FF FA60m^2 P4.5M 5347949

MANILA

MASANGKAY 4BR 128m^2 P2.8 7813658 09197048087

Sta. Ana TH 3BR 3TB 2ps P5.9 & 6.8M • 911-7940

MANDALUYONG

Various Mandaluyong Townhouses 534-6610 Jojo

Various Wack-Wack Condo Lee Gardens 5346610 Jojo

Wack' Tower 28 3TB Mds Rm 1ps P5.5M • 911-7940

MARIKINA

Nr. Ateneo TH Cinco Mkna Bnew 4BR FA350 681-9868

PASIG

11M Beautiful HSE South Bay Paranaque 141-259275

6.5M Townhse Kawilihan Vill Pasig 141-259275

2Br Condo 2Tb Maids Qtr 95.5sqm w/Paking Cortijos 2 Valle Verde 6 Call Delos Reyes 911-6510 AM Only

SACRIFICE SALE 5.2M 3BR Phoenix Hts Condo4121825

Pasig 3M BN 140FA 89LA 4BR 3TB Nice • 645-3731

Renaissance 3BR 199m^2@ 8.9M 223m^2 @9.5M 681-2457

QUEZON CITY

Cubao CondoP1.3M EZterm 9126976/9132224/4381480

4Dr Apt. Nr. Sm FV QC 2892895

Mapayapa Vill Thse P2.2M Terms Call 412-1652 Jen

New Mla 172m^2 Bnew 6M 2Sty 3BR w/2CG 413-4411

Nova P5T/mo.10yrs 9390299

Nr EDSA Dplex 3BR LA80 FA80 BN nice loc • 645-3731

Nr EDSA FA64 LA50 2TB BN nice loc 2.7M 645-3731

Sta Mesa Hts 110m^2 5M 3Sty 4BR w/2CG 413-4411

Teresa Hts Bung 240m^2 4br nr SM Fview 3.5M 9283267

TH LA85m^2 FA165m^2 3BR 3TB P3.3M F'view 9117940

TH LA91m^2 FA70m^2 3BR 2TB @ P2.8M • 911-7940

SAN JUAN

Annapolis GH Condo 3BR 170m^2 Nice MdsRm 9283267

G'hills Condo 3BR P5.5M w/Huge Balcony •723-2391

G'hills Ofc Condo 70m^2 w/ Pkrg FFur P3.2M 723-2391

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

CONDO/TWNHSE/APT

CASIMIRO TOWNHOMES
Habay, Bacoor, Cavite
near SM Bacoor
Initial DP: P15,000

WESTVILLE HOMES
Ligas, Bacoor, Cavite
Initial DP: P8,000
FORTE REALTY
2/F Princess Bldg, Esteban St,
Legaspi Village, Makati City
810-7297 810-6787
871-8318 810-7183
872-7603 810-8019
873-0787
Welcome Brokers & Agents

SAN JUAN

Ghills 3BR FFurn FA138 Blul View P5.5M 7232391

Greenhill Condo 1BR FA70 P3M • 723-2391

Greenhills Anapolis Condo 3BR P9-11M • 723-2391

Greenhills Eisenhower St. 3br Condo P6-8M 723-2391

Greenhills Ofc Condo 70m^2 w/Prkg P31M • 723-2391

Greenhills Thse 3BR FA180 2CarGrg • 723-2391 P6.8M

SAN JUAN CONDO 3BR 137 P4M • 723-2391

Wack' Twin 2BR FA145 Facing Golf Crse 723-2391

PROVINCIAL

OLONGAPO CITY PROPER New 4sty Condo Apartel & 3sty Res/Com'l 1 Bldg 35M 0917-9399898; 047-2224392

TH nr Marcos Hway Baguio FA108 71.7M • 911-7940

VARIOUS AREAS

Various Condo Ortigas, Pasig, Manda. 5346610 Jojo

MEMORIAL LOT

Heritage Park Main Road Lawn @ P97T • 534-7949

RESORT

Fairways & Bluewater w/ Certificate C1 • 534-7949

CLUB SHARE & MEMBERSHIP

Fairways & Bluewater w/ Certificate C1 • 534-7949

FONTANA SHARES 200T 928-3267 • 714-2867

FARM/FISHPEN

FARM LOT 1.8 Has Baras Rizal along Hway 681-9868

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

APARTMENT

RIZAL

80-B Pag-Asa St, Taytay Rizal 665-2753 U/D P3T 660-4314 Mon

HOUSE

ALABANG

Ayalabang Nice Hse Furn w/ Jacuzzi P80Th 5310651

LAS PINAS

S'dierll renovated 8004884

QUEZON CITY

1BR nr Ktpnan 8T 6819727

RIZAL

BUNGALOW BIG LOT Bucharest St., Filinvest Eastville Call 911-2070

CONDO/TWNHSE

MAKATI

Salcedo Nice Res Condo Ful Furn P80Th 5310651

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

HOUSE

MAKATI

Salcedo Off Condo Sale / Rent 3 Tel 23m^2 5310651

MANILA

Condo Alpha Salcedo 1BR Parking Phone Semi-Frnsh P35T/mo. (0917)928-0477

PASAY

Antel Seaview Roxas 1BR Studio 13-15T/mo 928-3267

PASIG

Alexandra 3BR@P55T/mo FF Ren 3BR UF P40T 681-2457

Valle Verde Thse 3BR 2Prkg Pool P25T/mo up 681-2457

VVerde6 FA250 3BR Attic P40T/mo • 723-2391

QUEZON CITY

P5,500/mo.CUBAO
P6,500/mo.Malate
Call 911-3361 / 522-6648

1BR1TB Balcony & Laundry fully furn w/ 1crprk total area 67.73m^2@ mo.Ignacia Ave 3638883 Cora / Vivian

LOYOLA GRAND 3T/m^2 2420922

SAN JUAN

2-3BR Ghills Furn Condo P25T • Pager 1277-37052

2BR 3TB Le Gran Condomn GREENHILLS •824-7758•

Greenhills SEV Studio 3BR P18-40T • 723-2391

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P975/mo. AIRCON
Cubao 911-3361; 926-4072

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2 % Wut taking Car 3677523/24

Fast Loan R/Estate & Car Financing Avail 4154936

BUSINESS RENTAL

P1,800/mo Stalls
Malate T-400-6420/23
Sn Pedro Lag 8086006/07

75sqm Ofc Space Bel-Air Mkt 8900151/09177905788

Concrete Bldg w/ 2flr Total Area 2400m^2 w/ prkg space 4 Truck located @ Araneta Univ. Vill. Malabon M.M. Call 363-8883 Cora / Vivian

NO FLOOD MALABON 361-0652

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CARS

HONDA

96LXi Autoblu 330T 8621746

HYUNDAI

Starex 98 MDL DSL 6313496

MERCEDES

126M.Benz see 2 apprcte 6348160

'83 230E 69Tkm Lvng 4 US Rush 225T Offer 934-3875

MITSUBISHI

93Lancer GLi 200T 8621746

'94 LANCER TAXI CAB P150T • Tel.# 658-2410

Galant 99 VR6 A/T Silver 0917-8192224 / 931-8609

Mit S-Wagon Acq. 93 1own 6348160

TOYOTA

96 Corolla GLi 1own 634-8160

OTHER CAR BRANDS

R-U-S-H S-A-L-E
• F-150 4x4 •
Fully Loaded Model 2000
•Honda Civic SiR•
Fully Loaded Model 1999
•Mitsubishi Lancer MX•
Model 1999
Call us at 8203676/7788120

TRANSPORTATION FOR SALE

BUSES/TRUCKS

NKR NPR Canter Carry FB Porter Lite-T-Ace Bongo Dump Mixer Cargo A. Van 4-6-10w 9126976; 9120647

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TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CARS FOR RENT

L3•Cars• 9273453 4538295

Starex, L300, Coaster Bus Cars 637-7396 631-3496

Van Coaster Bus 440-91-71

CARS•VANS•8978113•8955888 BUS•CSTER•BRIDAL•8969956

H-100 Van/Honda 920-7360

FX Cheap 373-0584 Cathy

HIACE L300 URVAN 8257135

L300 T 4161105 / 7411356

STAREX L3 9121809/7268388

Toyco Trans Cars Vans w/ or w/o driver 800-6595

•Car,Vans4535288;9296250

WANTED TO BUY

BUYING USED CARS 8990215

CAR LOAN

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 3646928

1.5% Fast Car Loan 3670169

1.5% w/o taking car OR/CR R/EstateLoan LO%4154936

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

HOME APPLIANCE

SONY WEGA Brand New TV 21" P15,800 Call 8205702

PETS

Shitzu F 15T 9176500920

UPPERMOST DOG SCHOOL #09197219020/9305846

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20 LANE US BRUNSWICK BOWL FBER GLAS PINS B'LIARD 044-7915370 MALOLOS-VIC

Billiard P25T & P30T New Accept C.Card • 781-9453

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Sales & Rentals T-9341569

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others, High Price CASH CALL 09178142309/7269687

Elem/H.S./College Plan 7137284 09177939632

ROLEX
Buy / Sell / Pawn / Repair
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MISCELLANEOUS

NIKON FT w/lens & flash P8000 Eric 645-0173

German Baby Grand PIANO A1Condition Call 911-6510 / 911-6514

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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WANTED IMMEDIATELY
4-MALE MECHANICS
with experience in Alignment and underchasis job, Automotive Technician Graduate preferred.

Apply in person with bio-data at:
ROADSTAR ENTERPRISES
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Sampaloc St.,
San Antonio Vill.,
Makati City.
Tel#896-2913/14
& 897-2905/06

FEMALE

Mac/PC Graphic Artist
Female Acctg. Clerk
Sales Secretary
for Printing Company
716-2738•716-3340
Near Stop 'N Shop

MAIDS direct hire 8425736

Office SEC. w/ Computer Knowledge Apply w/ Photo 7677 Jacinto St. (Near Washington) Makati City

Wanted MIDWIVES
De Ocampo Memorial Medical Center Pls Call 7151891-94 Look for Ms. Edna Calacal

MALE/FEMALE

CARE GIVER T-5280722

URGENT OFFICE STAFF CALL MR JOSE AT 7366660

Lic'd Nurse Needed Call 9249935

PUBLIC NOTICES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

• Financial Broker-GREG • 8218228/PAGE 141-182829

TELEMARKETING 2477469

BANGUS ONLINE
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JEWELRY NO CAPITAL CONSIGN Term Must be Employed 2778166

Landbank Bonds
WE BUY 0917-3959789
821-2743 • 821-2482 IKE

PR/ Publicity 931-7317

RTW Factory Price 7299681

RTW WHOLESALE 3714226

TRAVEL OPPOR 893-7903

TShirt Fac.Price 4383147

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given tha the estate of the lat JUANITO RAMIREZ IGNACIO was extrajudicially settled by his heirs as per Doc.107 Page 22, Book II, Series 2000 before Notary Publi Peter Irving Corvera Muntinlupa City
PDI-Feb. 2, 9 & 16, 200

NOTICE OF LOSS

Let it be known tha ROSARIO GEULEN / ROSARIO SING TAN 53 yrs. ol native born in the Phi residing at Anda, Boho married to James T. Geuler lost her ICR. This publishin serves as a requirement fo the reapplication thereo (PDI-Feb.9 & 16, 2001)

PERSONAL

NOVENA TO THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS AND SAINT JUDE

May the most Sacred Heart of Jesus be praised, blessed loved, adored and glorified throughout the whole world now and forever. Amen.

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus Pray for us.

St. Jude, worker of miracles helper for the helpless, pray for us.

Say nine times a day for nine days. Prayer will be answered by the eighth day, it has never failed.

Thank you very much, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and St Jude, for favor granted.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRARIAN REFORM
Region VII
Provincial Agrarian Reform Office
2nd Floor, WDC Bldg., P. Burgos & Osmeña Blvd., Cebu City
Tel. Nos.: 254-6595; 255-7138; 255-7488

NOTICE OF COVERAGE BY PUBLICATION

Pursuant to Section 7 of R.A. 6657, otherwise known as the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law of 1988, notice is hereby given that the landholdings herein described below are now covered under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law, to wit:

I - REGISTERED OWNER : Maria Camara
TITLE NUMBER : TCT-55960
LOT NUMBER : 31-A
AREA : 9.4410 has.
TAX DEC. NO. : 15-25689
LOCATION : Corte, Carmen, Cebu City

II - REGISTERED OWNER : Maria Camara
TITLE NUMBER : TCT-55952
LOT NUMBER : 12-A
AREA : 15.7063 has.
TAX DEC. NO. : 15-25690
LOCATION : Corte, Carmen, Cebu City

III - REGISTERED OWNER : Carmen Camara
TITLE NUMBER : TCT-55958
LOT NUMBER : 25-B
AREA : 8.9050 has.
TAX DEC. NO. : 15-25678
LOCATION : Corte, Carmen, Cebu City

IV - REGISTERED OWNER : Carmen Camara
TITLE NUMBER : TCT-55955
LOT NUMBER : 12-D
AREA : 15.4440 has.
TAX DEC. NO. : 15-25679
LOCATION : Corte, Carmen, Cebu City

V - REGISTERED OWNER : Jesus Camara
TITLE NUMBER : TCT-55961
LOT NUMBER : 31-B
AREA : 9.5952 has.
TAX DEC. NO. 15-25687
LOCATION : Corte, Carmen, Cebu City

VI - REGISTERED OWNER : Jesus Camara
TITLE NUMBER : TCT-55953
LOT NUMBER : 12-B
AREA : 19.7288 has.
TAX DEC. NO. : 15-25688
LOCATION : Corte, Carmen, Cebu City

VII - REGISTERED OWNER : Sps. Hermenegildo Pacaña & Teofisto Romo de Pacaña
TITLE NUMBER : TCT-7558
LOT NUMBER : 5119
AREA : 29.1071 has.
TAX DEC. NO. : 01762
LOCATION : Budbud, Barili, Cebu

VIII - REGISTERED OWNER : Enrique T. Tan, Jr.
TITLE NUMBER : TCT-98192
LOT NUMBER : Plan PSU-107288
AREA : 50.7769 has.
TAX DEC. NO. : 3301000145
3301300584
3301100013
3301700273
LOCATION : Duangan, Pinamungahan, Cebu

IX - REGISTERED OWNER : Norma G. Tan, Yolanda N. Tan, Rodolfo G. Tan & Victor Tan
TITLE NUMBER : TCT-58433
LOT NUMBER : 5209
AREA : 52.1168 has.
TAX DEC. NO. : 13325-A
LOCATION : Vito, Balamban, Cebu

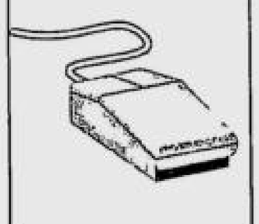
Notices were sent to the aforementioned landowners on their last known addresses thru Registered Mail via Philippine Postal Service but the same were returned, thus this Notice is resorted to by Publication.

Cebu City, Philippines, January 9, 2001.

(Sgd.) **VIRGILIO I. ALCOMENDRAS**
Provincial Agrarian Reform Officer II

(PDI Feb. 9, 13 & 16, 2001)

YOUR CAREER MIGHT ONLY BE A CLICK OF THE MOUSE AWAY.



JOBMarket ONLINE

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Republic of the Philippines
Province of Cagayan
Municipality of Amulung
OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL MAYOR

INVITATION TO BID

The Municipal Government of Amulung with principal office address at Centro, Amulung, Cagayan, invites all interested persons or entities to participate in the bidding for the purchase of two (2) units Reconditioned Japan: Isuzu DT preferably 10 PCI. 330 HP. 20 tons gross weight capacity (10 Wheeler) and one (1) unit Reconditioned Japan: Isuzu DT preferably 6GBI, 10 tons gross weight capacity (6 Wheeler). The public bidding shall be held at the Office of the Municipal Mayor at Centro, Amulung, Cagayan or at the DILG Central Office at Cubao, Quezon City on February 26, 2001 at 9:00 o'clock in the morning.

All interested persons or entities are to submit to the Office of the Municipal Mayor not later February 23, 2001 at 10:00 o'clock in the morning, vital documents necessary for pre-qualification to be conducted by the Municipal PBAC on the same day.

All pre-qualified prospective bidders are to submit their sealed proposals in two (2) copies to the PBAC not later than the date and time and at the place of public bidding above-mentioned. Proposals must be accompanied with a proposal bond in the form of cash, certified or manager's check, or bank draft, or any combination hereof payable to the Municipal Treasurer of Amulung, in the amount of 5% of the bid proposal, and Two Hundred pesos (200.00) as bidder's fee

The right is reserved to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality thereon or to accept such bids as may be considered advantageous to the government.

All communications relative to this Invitation must be addressed to the Office of the Municipal Mayor at Amulung, Cagayan.

Amulung, Cagayan, February 12, 2001.

(Sgd.) **NICANOR C. DE LEON**
Municipal Mayor/PBAC Chairman

(PDI--Feb. 16, 18 & 20, 2001)

REPUBLIKA NG PILIPINAS
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
KAGAWARAN NG EDUKASYON, KULTURA AT ISPORTS
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORTS
DECS Complex, Meralco Avenue
Pasig City, Philippines

Tanggapan ng Kalihim
Office of the Secretary

PILIPINAS 2000
Sama-Sama sa DECS

INVITATION TO BID

The Department of Education, Culture and Sports is inviting all accredited computer maintenance agencies for the bidding of maintenance contract for various computers, printers and fax machines located in the different OSEC Offices.

All interested agencies must submit a Letter of Intent before obtaining bid documents starting **February 14 to 21, 2001** at the PBAC Secretariat Office, Rm 112 A. Mabini Bldg., ULTRA Complex, Pasig City.

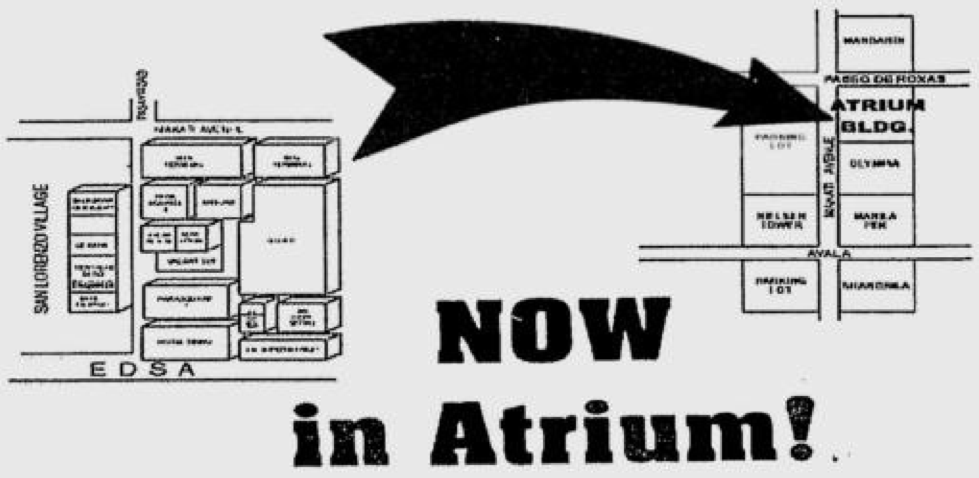
A pre-bid conference will be held on **February 28, 2001**, 10:00 AM at Bulwagan ng Karunungan, Rizal Bldg. I, ULTRA Complex, Pasig City. The submission and opening of bids will be on **March 9, 2001** at the same time and place mentioned above.

DECS-BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids to waive deficiencies embodied therein without assuming any obligation whatsoever to offset expenses or losses the bidder may incur in the preparation of the bid.

(Sgd.) **RAMON C. BACANI**
Undersecretary
Vice-Chairman, DECS-BAC

(PDI--Feb. 16, 17 & 18, 2001)

Inquirer's Makati Branch



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Makati City
New Tel. Nos. 811-4370 / 811-4361
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Have a guaranteed job in Japan.
Please bring documents that would show
Any proof of your Japanese blood.
(Original and Xerox copy)
PLEASE CALL : **Tel. No. 893-1191**
or visit
MISAKI BUSINESS CONSULTANTS, INC.
Unit 411 Perla Mansion Condominium
C. Palanca St., Legaspi Village, Makati City
Mondays to Fridays 8:00 - 11:00 AM only.
NO PROCESSING FEES.

WANTED IMMEDIATELY

GOLF COURSE
MAINTENANCE CONSULTANT

- Male, 21 to 30 years old
- Graduate of any 4-year course
- Must have at least 5 years experience as golf course maintenance consultant or supervisor

Send your application letter, resumé, transcript of records and recent ID photo to:

P.O. Box No. 092-SPPO
SAN PEDRO LAGUNA 4023

WANTED

MACHINE SHOP

ALL-AROUND MACHINE AND EQUIPMENT OPERATOR IF YOU HAVE A POSITIVE CAREER PLAN. PLS. SEND RESUMÉ (w/ PHOTO. STATE YOUR SPECIALTIES) TO

ONWARD ENTERPRISES
#4 LANTAWAN ST., QUEZON CITY

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
BOARD OF INVESTMENTS
Industry & Investments Building
385 Gil J. Puyat Avenue
Makati City, Philippines
FAX No. 895-83-22
895-40-24
Tel. Nos. 897-66-82
895-39-87

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the application of **TRANSNATIONAL E-BUSINESS SOLUTIONS, INC.** with office address at **2/F, Mary Bacharach Building, 25th St. corner A.C. Delgado St., Port Area, Manila** for registration with the Board of Investments under Book I of the Omnibus Investments Code of 1987, otherwise known as E.O. 226, as Amended as **New IT Service Firm in the Field of Information Technology Services (Application Service Provider)** at the following annualy capacities **ASP - 28,800 processing hours; IT Consulting - 5,880 manhours; and IT Outsourcing - 168,000 network hours** with proposed project site at **Manila** has been officially accepted on **09 February 2001** and is currently being processed.

Any person with valid objections to or pertinent comments on the above-mentioned application may file his/her objection, in writing under oath, with the BOI within one (1) week from the date of this publication.

Issued this 9th day of February 2001

(Sgd.) **C.O. ANGELES**
Director
Legal Services Department

(PDI--Feb. 16, 2001)

SUMMONS - FAMILY LAW

CITATION JUDICIAL
NOTICE TO RESPONDENT: ROWENA GOMEZ
YOU ARE BEING SUED
PETITIONERS NAME IS: JOMAR GOMEZ
CASE NUMBER : FFL057015

You have **30 CALENDAR YEAR DAYS** after this Summons and Petition served on you to file a Response (form 1282) at the court and serve a copy on the petitioner. A letter or phone call will not protect you. If you do not file your Response on time, the court may make orders affecting your marriage, your property, and custody of your children. You may be ordered to pay support and attorney fees and costs. If you cannot pay the filling fee, ask the clerk for a fee waiver form. If you want legal advice, contact a lawyer immediately.

NOTICE: The restraining orders on the back are affective against both husband and wife until the petition is dismissed, a judgment is entered or the court makes further orders. These orders are enforceable anywhere in California by any law enforcement officer who has received or seen a copy of them.

1. The name and address of the court is:
   SOLANO COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT
   600 UNION AVENUE
   FAIRFIELD, CA 94533
2. The name, address, and telephone number of petitioner's attorney, or petitioner without an attorney, is:
   JOMAR GOMEZ
   105 DEL RIO CIR. UNIT #1
   VACAVILLE, CA 95687
   (707) 469-8700

Date: December 19, 2000
CHARLES D. RAMSEY
Clerk, by V. Lee, Deputy

(PDI - Jan. 26, Feb. 2, 9 & 16, 2001)

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO

In the Matter of the
Adoption Petition of
BILLY J. VOSSLER
Adopting Parent

Case No. 00AD00295
CITATION TO APPEAR

The People of the State of California
To **RODELIO DELA FUENTE**

By order of this Court, you are hereby cited and required to appear before Department 124 of the above-entitled Court on June 4, 2001 at 8:30 a.m. then and there to show cause, if any you have, why **JAN BENIGNO DELA FUENTE** and **MARK CHRISTIAN DELA FUENTE**, minors should not be declared free from your parental control according to the petition on file herein to free the minors for adoption.

The address of the Court is: 3341 Power Inn Road, Sacramento, California 95826.

For a failure without reasonable cause to appear and abide by the order of the Court, you will be deemed guilty of a contempt of Court.

The following information concerns rights and procedures which related to this proceeding for the termination of custody and control of **JAN BENIGNO DELA FUENTE** and **MARK CHRISTIAN DELA FUENTE**, as set forth in Sections 7860-7864 of the Family Code.

(1) At the beginning of the proceeding the Court will consider whether or not the interest of **JAN BENIGNO DELA FUENTE** and **MARK CHRISTIAN DELA FUENTE**, require the appointment of counsel. If the Court finds that the interest of **JAN BENIGNO DELA FUENTE** and **MARK CHRISTIAN DELA FUENTE** do require such protection, the Court will appoint counsel to represent them, whether or not they are able to afford counsel. **JAN BENIGNO DELA FUENTE** and **MARK CHRISTIAN DELA FUENTE**, will not be present in Court unless they so request or the Court so orders.

(2) If a parent of **JAN BENIGNO DELA FUENTE** and **MARK CHRISTIAN DELA FUENTE**, appears without counsel and is unable to afford counsel, the Court must appoint counsel for the parent, unless the parent knowingly and intelligently waives the right to be represented by counsel. The Court will not appoint the same counsel to represent both **JAN BENIGNO DELA FUENTE** and **MARK CHRISTIAN DELA FUENTE** and their parent.

(3) The Court may appoint either the public defender or private counsel. If private counsel is appointed, he or she will receive a reasonable sum for compensation and expenses, the amount of which will be determined by the Court. That amount must be paid by the real parties in interest, but not by the minors, in such proportions as the Court believes to be just. If, however, the Court finds that any of the real parties in interest cannot afford counsel, the amount will be paid by the County.

(4) The Court may continue the proceeding for not more than thirty (30) days as necessary to appoint counsel and to enable counsel to become acquainted with the case.

DATED: February 1, 2001

By: (Sgd.) F.M. Stevenson
Deputy Clerk

(PDI--Feb. 16, 2001)

MANNING AGENCY to be established soon at Manila to recruit seamen for dry cargo and tanker vessels requires:

GENERAL MANAGER with good managerial skills and with good experience in related position.

CHIEF ACCOUNTANT with adequate academic qualifications and experience in similar position.

DOCUMENTATION MANAGER/P.O.E.A. LIAISON with related experience and knowledge.

SECRETARY with excellent English and qualifications including computer word/excel etc.

Full C.V. with photo and reference letter to be mailed to:

P.O. BOX 13444, Ortigas Center Post Office
Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

Department of Education, Culture and Sports
THIRD ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROJECT
PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT UNIT
5th Floor Bonifacio Bldg., DECS Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City

Date: February 12, 2001
Loan/Credit Number: 4108 PH
Project Title: Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP)

INVITATION TO SUBMIT SUPPLEMENTARY READING MATERIALS FOR EVALUATION

TO ALL PUBLISHERS / SUPPLIERS:

1. The Government of the Republic of the Philippines through the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) has received a loan from the World Bank in various currencies towards the cost of the Third Elementary Education Project and it is intended that part of the loan proceeds will be applied to eligible payments for the procurement of supplementary reading materials
2. The Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) Project Implementation Support Unit (PISU) for Third Elementary Education Project now invites publishers/suppliers to submit four (4) copies of supplementary reading materials for evaluation. The materials should meet the following criteria:
   a. Sample titles shall be supplementary reading materials to five core elementary school subjects as Science, Mathematics, English, Filipino and Sibika at Kultura,
   b. The material shall (a) enrich/enhance skills and knowledge acquired by pupils from their basic reading materials such as textbooks; (b) extend application of a basic concept, process and method; (c) make reading an enjoyable learning activity;
   c. The material shall be trendy or up-to-date - i.e. it follows the trend such as big-sized books, 'tape-plus' book, book that allows shared reading with peers, etc.;
   d. The materials shall be user friendly and suitable to elementary school-aged children, and
   e. The material shall have an ISBN to allow for competition.
3. Encyclopedia, dictionary, atlas and similar reference materials will not be accepted.
4. A selection committee has been created composed of curriculum specialists, instructional materials specialists, and master teachers. It will evaluate the materials in terms of the above criteria and additional criteria such as content, structure, organization and presentation. It will decide which materials meet the criteria and are acceptable in the competitive bidding that will be conducted for the procurement of supplementary reading materials.
5. Further, publishers/suppliers are required to submit the technical specifications of each sample. For details you may contact the Procurement Unit of TEEP, Tel. No. (02) 638-4730, Facsimile No. (02) 636-6539
6. We expect to receive the materials from April 2 to 6, 2001. Materials should be submitted at the Bulwagan ng Karunungan, Rizal Building I, Department of Education, Culture and Sports, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City. Receiving of samples will be from 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. on said date.

(Sgd.) **LIDINILA M. LUIS-SANTOS**
Director IV, BEE and
Project Manager

(PDI - Feb. 13, 16, 2001)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Intramuros, Manila

INVITATION TO BID

Sealed bids for the supply and delivery of election supplies and forms in connection with the May 14, 2001 National and Local Elections shall be received at the Session Hall, Commission on Elections, Postigo Street, Intramuros, Manila, on February 22, 2001 at 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon, at which place, date and time, said sealed bids shall be opened in the presence of the representatives of the Commission on Elections, participating bidders and the public. Bid documents and specifications may be obtained from the Supply Officer V, Property Division, during regular office hours, beginning February 15, 2001.

A pre-bid conference shall be held on February 19, 2001, 2:00 P.M. at the Session Hall, Commission on Elections, Intramuros, Manila.

Bids shall be accompanied by a Bidder's Bond equivalent to ten *per centum* (10%) of the offer, bid, tender or quotation, in the form of a cash or manager's check/cashier's check payable to the "Commission on Elections".

The Commission reserves the right to reject any and all bids, to waive any defect thereon or to accept only bids which are most advantageous to the government.

February 13, 2001.

(Sgd.) **RALPH C. LANTION**
PBEC Chairman

(PDI--Feb. 16, 2001)

PNOC
The Energy Company

PNOC EXPLORATION CORPORATION
Bldg. 1, Energy Center, Merritt Road
Fort Bonifacio, Makati, Metro Manila
Tel. 893-1320 or 893-6001 Loc. 1120
Fax No. (632) 845-3090

INVITATION TO BID

PNOC Exploration Corporation (PNOC-EC) invites eligible suppliers to submit sealed bids for the supply and delivery of the following:

PR NO. SG 214 102—TRANSFORMER; 4,000 kVA

This invitation is open to all accredited suppliers of PNOC-Energy Group of Companies.

Bid documents shall be available for issuance to accredited suppliers starting **February 14, 2001.**

For the purpose of clarifications, a pre-bidding conference will be conducted at the above address on **March 1, 2001** at 2:00 p.m.

All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in the amount stipulated in the tender documents in the forms acceptable to PNOC-EC. Sealed technical and financial bids in two (2) sets shall be received by the PNOC-EC Purchasing not later than 2:00 p.m. of **March 8, 2001** at the above address. Late bids will not be accepted. Public opening of the technical bids will follow thereafter. The schedule of the financial bid opening will be formally advised to participating bidders and only the bids of the technically complying bidders shall be opened.

PNOC-EC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, or to accept such bids or to award any part thereof to any bidder/s whose bid/s is/are considered most advantageous to PNOC-EC.

(Sgd.) **RAFAEL E. DEL PILAR**
Vice President & COO

(PDI -- Feb. 16, 2001)

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the joys, the tears...
the Celebration of Life,
with you through the years...
there will never be a greater
blessing than you, Mommy...
*for you truly are the **wind beneath our wings***
the fulfillment of all that Love can bring.

MARIA LUCIA (LUCY) CABUG CEPILLO

*Peacefully joined her loving husband **Atty. Gualberto Loyola Cepillo***
and went home to our God Almighty
on Monday, February 12, 2001 at the age of 64.

Her beloved children **Vice Mayor Leilani Victoria** and **Dr. Reynaldo Gonzales**, **Mr. Ronaldo Cepillo**, **Engr. Roberto Cepillo**, **Engr. Honorio** and **Myrna Cepillo**, **Engr. Raymond Anthony Cepillo**, and **Dr. Joel Cepillo**; grandchildren **Raphael Iñigo**, **Paolo Angelo**, **Gabriel Angelo**, and **Katrina Angela**; parents **Alberto Sr.** (†) and **Benedicta Cabug**; brothers and sisters **Manuel** (†) and **Loyola Cabug**, **Reynaldo** (†) and **Lucy Cabug**, **Romualdo** and **Mina** (†) **Cabug**, **Salvacion Cabug** (†), **Alberto Jr.** and **Cynthia Cabug**, **Jovita** and **Miguel Aquino**, **Lucino** and **Nellie Cabug**, **Veronica** and **Dante Ferareza**, **Cristita** and **Montano Bawalan**, **Pio** and **Carol Cabug**, and **Roque** and **Doris Cabug**; nephews, nieces, cousins, relatives, and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Mortuary of the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, Batangas City.

Interment will be on Saturday, February 17, 2001 at the Eternal Memorial Gardens, Batangas City after the 3:00 o'clock in the afternoon Mass at the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, Batangas City.

In Memoriam
on the First Death Anniversary of

Estela T. Guzman

26 July 1931 – 16 February 2000
Holy Masses will be offered at the following churches
on Friday, February 16, 2001

Monasterio de Santa Clara *Katipunan Avenue, Quezon City*	**6:00 AM**
St. John Mary de Vianney Church *Marcos Highway, Antipolo*	**6:00 AM**
St. Bede's Catholic Church *La Cañada, Los Angeles*	**8:00 AM**
St. Timothy's Church *Laguna Niguel, California*	**8:30 AM**
Shrine of Mary, Queen of Peace *(Edsa Shrine), Edsa*	**12:15 PM**
St. Ignatius Church *Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City*	**12:15 PM**
St. John Bosco Parish *Arnaiz St., Makati City*	**12:15 PM**
Santuario de San Antonio Parish *Forbes Park, Makati*	**6:00 PM**
Christ the King Parish *Greenmeadows, Quezon City*	**6:00 PM**
Santuario de San Jose Parish *Greenhills, Mandaluyong*	**6:15 PM**
St. Ignatius Chapel *St. Ignatius Village, Quezon City*	**7:00 PM**

The Guzman family wishes to thank
all those who continue to pray for her.

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

FELIX T. LIMCHAYSENG, DMD

who passed away in the Grace of our Lord on January 18, 2001

wish to express our heartfelt gratitude and sincerest appreciation to all those of offered Masses and prayers, sent flowers and messages of sympathy and who in countless ways, condoled with and comforted us in our hour of bereavement.

NATIVIDAD T. NACIANCENO, Ed.D

Dean, Graduate School, Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila (PLM), 1987-1991
Chief, Research & Evaluation Services,
Division of City Schools, Manila, 1978-1985
Principal Bicol Central Academy, Libmanan,
Camarines Sur, 1952-1969

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord on February 14, 2001
at the age of 74.

Her parents **Frank (†)** and **Victoria (†)**; brothers and sisters **Cesar (†)**, **Lumen**, **Lino**, **Francis Jr.**, **Alicia (†)**, **Emily (†)**, **Beatriz** and **Azucena**; in-laws, nephews, nieces, relatives and friends request for your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her mortal remains lie in state at the La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City. Interment follows after the Holy Mass at 9:00 a.m., Sunday, February 18, 2001 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City.

ROSENDA NATIVIDAD-AGUILA M.D.

(U.P. College of Medicine Class 1934)
March 01, 1910 - February 15, 2001

*Peacefully joined her loving husband **Alfredo** and went home to our*
God Almighty on Thursday, February 15, 2001 at the age of 90.

Her beloved children **Freddie** and **Monina**, **Eddie** and **Connie**, **Terry** and **Lynda**; grandchildren **Arlyn** and **Jun**, **Dong** (†) and **Zarah**, **Dodie** and **Mary Anne**, **Ana** and **Peter**, **Almond**, **Fred**, **Ditoy**, **Artie**; great grandchildren **Jim**, **Issa**, **Jake**, **Andi** and **Dianne**; her brother **Artemio Natividad**; her sisters **Memoria Guerrero** and **Pilar Aysip**; request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Sta. Maria Della Strada Parish Church, Katipunan Road, Diliman, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, February 18, 2001 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Parañaque City, after the 8:00 a.m. Holy Mass.

The Management, Board-of-Directors, Stockholders and staff of

RURAL BANK OF SAN RAFAEL, BULACAN

request your prayers for the soul of

ANTONIO "Luna" F. VIOLAGO

died February 12, 2001 at the age of 85.

His remains lie in state at his residence at #47 Cruz na Daan, San Rafael, Bulacan.

Interment will be on Saturday, February 17, 2001 at Himlayang Pang Ala-al
San Roque, San Rafael, Bulacan after the 8:00 AM Mass.

NEMESIO TUPAS NATIVIDAD

of Morong Rizal

Former Director - The Asia Foundation Book Program
Correctional Officer of Prince George's Country
Maryland USA

Died in the Grace of our Lord on February 10, 2001
At the age of 69.

His loving wife, his children **Nilo**, **Arlyn** and **Howard**, **Nelson** and **Vicki**; his grandchildren **Vanessa Helene** and **Andre Neil**; his brother **Arsenio** and sisters **Isang** and **Julia**; and all relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at his hometown residence at #251 Natividad St., Morong Rizal.

Funeral Mass will be on Sunday, February 18, 2001 at St. Jerome Parish Church, Morong Rizal at 1:30 PM.

Interment will immediately follow.

THE HONOR SOCIETY OF PHI KAPPA PHI
University of the Philippines Chapter
announces with deep sorrow the demise of
PROFESSOR JOSEPHINE "JOSIE" MARQUEZ MALIXI
President Emeritus
Retired Professor, U.P. College of Pharmacy
Founding Director, Office of Institutional Linkages
on February 12, 2001.
Her remains lie in state at the Santuario de San Antonio Church, Forbes Park, Makati City.
The Society requests the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

"We know that God raised the Lord Jesus from death. He will raise us to life with Jesus. He will present us, along with you, to God."

2 Cor. 4:14

I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies, and whoever believes in Me will never die.

John 11:25-26

Happy are those who have died in the Lord; let them rest from their labors for their good deeds go with them. Rev. 14:13

Ofelia Trinidad Sevilla

was lovingly called by our lord and Savior Jesus Christ to dwell on the House of the Father forever on Valentine's Day, February 14, 2001, she was 64 years old.

She will be most missed by her loving and caring husband **Atty. Francisco C. Sevilla Sr.**; by her children **Bernadette, Gerardo Ulysses, Ferdinand** (✞), **Francisco Jr., Rebecca** and **Ma. Theresa**; by her sons and daughters-in-law **Ricky, Leila, Zaida, Lani** and **Edwin**; by her grandchildren **Kenneth, Raymond, George Francis, Patricia Camille, Brian, Miguel, Albert, Jules Edrich, Ma. Laviet** and **Francisco III**; by her brothers and sisters **Orlando, Adoracion, Rogelio, Linda** (✞), **Bhonn, Benny, Udi, Ante** and **Romy**; and by all of us who were given the grace to know and love her.

Her body lies in state at Chapel C-1, La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, February 18, 2001 after the Holy Mass at 8:00 a.m. at Himlayang Pilipino.

In Loving Memory
on the 10th Death Anniversary of

LEONARDO "Narding" N. MURILLO

Who died in the Grace of our Lord on February 16, 1991

Masses Offered:

Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish Church, *Quezon City*	6:30 AM
Quiapo Church	7:00 AM
Holy Family Parish, *Kamias, Quezon City*	6:30 PM
Sacred Heart Church, *Kamuning, Quezon City*	7:00 AM

..ABSENT FROM THE BODY, PRESENT WITH THE LORD
2 Corinthians 5:8

In Loving Memory
on the 10th Death Anniversary of our beloved "DADDY"

LEONARDO "Narding" ARCEO LIBIRAN

of Balagtas, Bulacan who passed away on February 16, 1991

We, his family request relatives, friends and pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Holy Mass will be offered today at the following churches:

1. Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish Road 8, Proj. 6, Q.C.	6:00 a.m.
2. Our Lady of the Annunciation Mindanao Avenue, Q.C.	6:00 p.m.
3. Parish of the Risen Lord Dalandanan, Valenzuela City	6:00 a.m.

In Loving Memory of

Doña Victoria Lopez Araneta

On her 13th death anniversary
March 6, 1907 - February 16, 1988

Holy Masses will be offered today at the following Churches:

1. **Our Lady of Grace**, Caloocan City	6:00 a.m.
2. **Baguio Cathedral**	6:00 a.m.
3. **St. Vincent Church**, Baguio	6:00 a.m.
4. **Immaculate Concepcion**, Malabon	6:00 a.m.
5. **Our Lady of Manaoag**, Pangasinan	6:30 a.m.
6. **OUR LADY OF VICTORY CHAPEL**	10:00 a.m.
7. **Feati U Chapel**	11:00 a.m.
8. **RFM Chapel**, Pioneer St.	12:15 p.m.
9. **San Bartolome**, Malabon	5:30 p.m.
10. **San Roque**, Blumentritt	5:00 p.m.
11. **Sts. Peter & John**, Potrero	6:30 p.m.
12. **San Antonio de Padua**, Tonsuya, Malabon	6:30 p.m.

Interment of her daughter
Ana Marie Lopez Araneta Santos-Ocampo
will be on Saturday, February 17, 2001 at the
Our Lady of Victory Chapel, Araneta Compound,
Victoneta Avenue, Potrero, Malabon, Metro Manila

The family will also remember the late
DR. SALVADOR ARANETA.

LORETO PERILLA PEÑARROYO

Peacefully joined his Creator on 10 February 2001 at the age of 70.

He is survived by his wife **Milagros Sanchez Peñarroyo**; children **Butch** and **Lily**, and **Ronnie** and **Iya**; grandchildren **Mark Anthony**, **Tristan Joshua** and **Beatrice**; brothers, sisters, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, nephews, nieces, cousins, relatives and friends.

We request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Arlington East The Garden Chapels, C. Raymundo Avenue, Pasig City.

The remains will be transferred to St. Anthony Parish Church at Singalong, Manila on 16 February 2001.

Interment will be on Saturday, 17 February 2001 at the Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque after the 1:00 p.m. Mass at St. Anthony Church.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

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OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS: ❶ Copy of Death Certificate ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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Nivel Hills, Lahug, Cebu City
Tels. 231-0721 231-3192
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Camus Ext. cor. J. Abad Santos, Davao City
Tels. (082) 227-1201; 227-1258

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Tels 646-1725/1730
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Tels 642-3010, 633-3602
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Caisadang Bago, Pateros, Metro Manila
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#27 Crisologo St., Vigan, Ilocos Sur
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Manila #23 Pato St., Project 2, Quezon City;
Tel. 434-3258

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143 G. Araneta Ave. cor. Kaliraya St., Quezon City;
Tels 749-3806 to 11
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79 Naguilian Rd., Baguio City
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ANNOUNCEMENT

Please be informed of our new classified advertising rates effective **February 1, 2001 issue.**

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INQUIRER
TRiViA
By BONG BARRAMEDA

Paparazzi

Q. Why are celebrity-hounding photographers called *paparazzi?*

A. The collective name derives from Paparazzo, a particularly obtrusive photographer in the 1960 film *La Dolce Vita* by famed Italian director Federico Fellini. Fellini chose the name, it has been suggested, because it hinted onomatopoetically at the predatory nature of the character — a 'buzzing, stinging, annoying sort of insect.' Considering the voracious nature of such hangers-on, Fellini may also have had in mind the Italian verb *pappare,* which means 'to devour with wild abandon.' The singular of *paparazzi* is *paparazzo.*

First of All. The first snapshot camera designed for amateurs with no technical interest in photography was the fixed-focus Kodak No. 1 launched by George Eastman of Rochester, New York at $25 in June 1888. It used paper roll film already loaded in the camera, giving 100 circular pictures 2.5 inches in diameter. The camera had to be mailed to the Eastman factory to be unloaded and processed and it was returned reloaded together with the hundred prints. Before this, enthusiastic amateurs using cameras designed specifically for professionals had to do their own developing and printing.

***Name Game.* Canon.** The Japanese brand of camera takes its name from that of Kannon, the Buddhist goddess of compassion and mercy known to the Chinese as Kuan-yin. The camera name was originally Kwannon when the company was founded in 1933, but in 1947 this was altered to Canon, a name more acceptable to a Western market.

WORD WATCH

Photogenic (foht'uh jen'ik) : from the Greek *photos,* 'a light' + the Latin *genero,* 'to produce, give birth to.'

PDI – February 16, 2001

Philippine Economic Zone Authority
Almeda Bldg. Roxas Blvd. cor. San Luis St.,
Pasay City, Philippines
Tel. Nos. 551-3443; 891-6423

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO SUBMIT PROPOSAL FOR THE OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE OF MACTAN ECONOMIC ZONE (MEZ) ELECTRICAL DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS

The Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) invites all qualified applicants to pre-qualify and submit technical and price proposals for the Operation and Maintenance Services requirements of the electrical distribution system of Mactan Economic Zone located in Mactan Island, Cebu.

Pre-qualification documents are available for issuance to prospective applicants at the following address:

Philippine Economic Zone Authority
BAC - Infrastructure
3rd Floor, Almeda Bldg., Roxas Blvd. cor. San Luis St.,
Pasay City, Philippines
Tel. Nos. 551-3443; 891-6423

upon presentation of original or certified true copy of SEC Registration and/or DTI Registration. Documents may be obtained upon payment of non-refundable fee of P1,000.00 up to 23 February 2001.

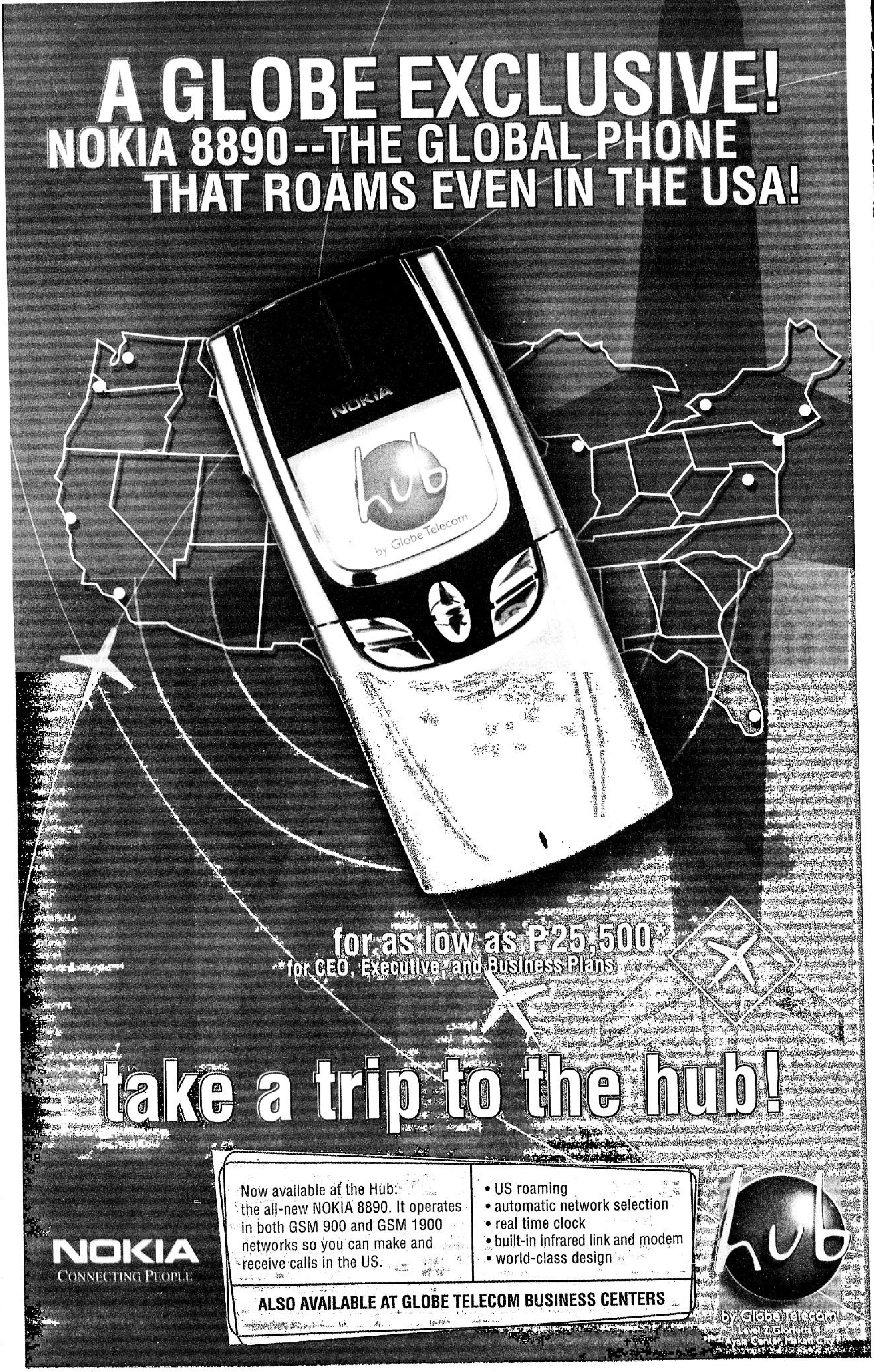
Four (4) copies of the duly accomplished pre-qualification statement & bid proposal together with all other requirements shall be submitted to the BAC Secretariat on or before 5:00 p.m. of **05 March 2001.**

PEZA reserves the right to reject any application or all bids or any part thereof, to waive any defect or informality therein without assuming any obligation whatsoever to offset expenses or losses the bidder may incur in the preparation of the bids, and will entertain only such bid/s established to be the most advantageous to PEZA.

Applicants will be advised in due course, of the results of their applications.

CHAIRMAN
BAC-Infrastructure

(PDI - Feb 9 16 & 22 2001)



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BUSINESS *Friday*

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Can business afford not to care?

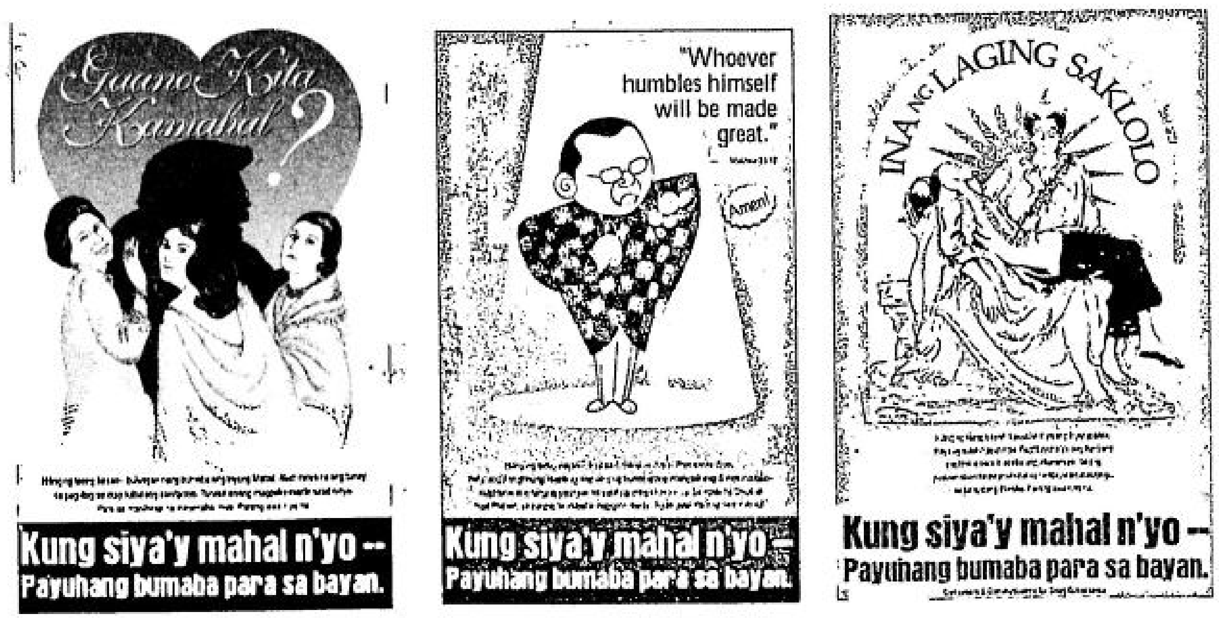
BY YOLY VILLANUEVA-ONG

"PRINCIPLES," declared a highly successful and controversial businessman, "are only for those that can afford them."

Indeed capitalism has spawned a breed of hard-nosed entrepreneurs whose philosophy in life is summarized in numbers. For every peso spent, five or more must augment the bottom line. Big business is made up of integers and multipliers. It is cold, impersonal and heartless. Until the '90s, "Nice guys finish last" was the accepted conventional wisdom. Altruism and capitalism are as compatible as oil and water. Any activity that does not make a direct impact on sales was an indulgence, if not a reason to fire the marketing manager.

But sometime in the last decade before the much awaited New Millennium, the more visionary companies discovered that developing a corporate soul was a great way of differentiating their brand specially in a parity milieu. Body Shop launched its skin care and beauty line with a "strict no animal testing" policy, and sealed it with an automatic donation to an animal rights movement for every product bought. The success of Body Shop in a highly crowded and competitive category was short of phenomenal. Thus, advocacy communications began to be considered a "legitimate" marketing communication tool.

More brands followed with less trepidation. Rockport took on the fitness walking advocacy and quickly became a major brand at less than 20 percent of the advertising investment of Nike and Reebok. Guess Jeans embraced the AIDS cause and came up with sexy fashion spreads that celebrated sexuality but warned against unsafe practices. United Colors of Benetton sponsored racial equality on its launch, then moved on to a much-talked-about anti-death penalty campaign. (But the latter stirred so much controversy, it was quickly pulled out.)


Gaano Kita Kamahal?
Kung siya'y mahal n'yo --
Payuhang bumaba para sa bayan.
"Whoever humbles himself will be made great."
Amen!
Kung siya'y mahal n'yo --
Payuhang bumaba para sa bayan.
INA NG LAGING SAKLOLO
Kung siya'y mahal n'yo --
Payuhang bumaba para sa bayan.

AT THE HEIGHT of anti-Erap movements, the Consumers and Communicators for Good Governance launched these series of ads which irritated the Puno-Maceda camp.

And so, before any capitalist could sneeze at advocacy as a waste of money, the verdict was out that it was one of the hottest media trends. And the best part was that social marketing was not only good for the soul, it was even better for the pocket.

Also known as social marketing or development communications (in the '70s), and simply "public service" for the layman, advocacy comes from the Latin word "advocare," which means, "called in" or "make a stand." Since industry is deemed as being largely responsible for society's ills, and government is too cash-strapped to fund its own public service campaigns, big business should volunteer to do its payback.

It is heartening to witness the beginning of "advocate companies" that have begun to see the light. Del Monte was one of the first to rescue the Philippine Eagle from extinction. Nestlé is consistent in its "Sa mata ng mga Bata . . ." campaign.

Causes like road rage, cruelty to animals, anti-smut, anti-drugs, clean air and water, have had various sponsors put their money where their heart is. The good deed is also a good deal not just in sales and corporate reputation, but sometimes even for winning creative awards.

People Power II was fueled by advocacy communications. Ads run by various groups helped underscore the urgent demand for new leadership. Calls for resignation were echoed in various ads from Couples for Christ, Ateneo, UST, La Salle, UP, PCCI, Kompil II and CCGG (Consumers and Communicators for Good Governance).

In a sustained campaign that was financed primarily with a pass-the-hat effort, CCGG managed to run a series of print ads that irritated the Puno-Maceda camp so much, that they mimicked each ad with lookalikes that were meant to confuse the public. As usual, it was a gross underestimation of the intelligence of readers.

By the time the impeachment trial began, a change of communication strategy was effected in the CCGG campaign. The *Guardia Senado* series was born. The ads religiously monitored the behavior, quotes, body language and seeming inclination of the senator-judges. This could no longer be aped by the pro-Erap spin-doctors. After all, the whole nation was watching and witnessing the veracity of the *Guardia Senado* ads for themselves. By this time too, Kompil II and CCGG had joined their meager resources for better mileage.

People Power II was remarkable for accomplishing the ouster of a corrupt and incompetent administration. But equally astounding was how businessmen, stockbrokers and lawyers—professionals not exactly famous for scrupulous consciences and taking controversial stands—did just that. There they were, frontrunners at the rallies, literally breaking bread with militants! Considering how phobic these groups are of any red-flag waver, this was one for *Ripley's Believe-It- Or- Not*.

For me though, the biggest miracle would be if we, the Filipino citizens, remain vigilant and committed to exact the kind of governance we deserve. Unlike Edsa I, we should not go our merry way and leave the leaders unwatched. It is our job to keep them honest. Like any other human endeavor, whether it's golf or a vision, follow-through is the biggest challenge. It is time to make our government truly of the people, by the people, and for the people.

So can business afford not to care? I think every businessman who has experienced being extorted, fleeced and harassed just to be able to do business knows the answer to this question. Business cannot be healthy in an unhealthy society. That is the most fundamental premise that any smart entrepreneur believes intuitively in his heart of hearts.

Every time Nestlé runs an advocacy campaign that is directed at children, they realize that they are communicating to their future target market. When Citibank makes a donation to reforest the La Mesa Watershed, they know that in the long run it affects their lives directly. Advocacy communication is one of the few investments that has a double bottom line.

In a few more years, I daresay that patronage of consumers will no longer just depend only on the product benefit or the brand image, but on whether the company that manufactures the brand, is considered an upright business citizen.

I foresee the day, when Filipino consumers will emulate their American counterparts and boycott a cosmetic product because they are against

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Do you want to be 'smart' or 'ready'?

By TINA ARCEO-DUMLAO

A RECENT survey on Asian consumers showed that Asians are widespread users of credit even though they are opposed to the idea of owing debts.

The survey said that even if people say they don't like credit, they like what it offers: access to cars, clothing and furniture they couldn't otherwise afford; the ability to manage their children's education or unplanned medical events; or simply the flexibility to manage cash flow.

They like what credit offers but they are averse to the ton of paperwork that usually accompanies getting a loan and many have no collateral to back one up anyway.

This was one of the reasons why the Philippines did not place high in the survey of credit users in Asia, unlike South Korea where 80 percent of the population have access to credit.

Two of the country's largest foreign banks say they now have the right kind of credit facility that should give more consumers access to much needed credit.

Standard Chartered Bank offers Smart Credit while Citibank N.A. has Ready Credit.

The products have many similarities: both do not require any collateral, deposit or guarantor for the consumers to avail of a loan.

SAXENA

Both also claim to be very accessible and require only a one-time application but Standard Chartered and Citibank say there are major differences that should end up with one company getting a bigger share of the growing credit pie.

Smart Credit

Anurag Saxena, head of marketing of Standard Chartered, tells BusinessFriday that the main attractions include the high credit limit and the low interest rate.

A qualified borrower can take a loan of as much as P1 million depending on the net monthly income. Fixed interest rates start at 1.5 percent, much lower than a regular credit card set at over 3 percent.

ST. GABRIEL'S HOSPITAL
JULY 5, 2000
80,000.00
EIGHTY THOUSAND PESOS ONLY
Citibank Ready Credit
BANKS offer credit lines for emergencies.

Repayments are made in fixed monthly installments through post-dated checks.

Saxena says an added feature is that half of the loan amount can be used as a revolving credit line, where the borrower can pay the interest only on the amount used.

"This is an ideal product for professionals who have a big need or a dream that they want to fulfill right now. It also helps plan finances because they are supposed to give post-dated checks," Saxena explains.

The primary target market, he says, are professionals who earn about P25,000 a month or self-employed individuals taking home at least P50,000 a month.

He says the fixed interest rate is popular among Filipinos who want to know how much they are going to pay every month.

Saxena says most of those who availed of the Smart Credit used the money to go abroad, renovate their house or to raise that much needed capital to fulfill a big order for a small business.

Ready Credit

On the other hand, Annette W. Tirol, assistant vice president of Citibank's consumer banking group, says the Ready Credit is popular with those who want a ready standby credit facility they can dip into in case of emergencies.

Tirol says Ready Credit works just like a credit card but the advantage is that the borrower can get cash of up to P250,000.

Tirol says Citibank's market research shows that the money is ideal for young families who want ready cash for their children's expenses, for small businessmen and for those expecting a new baby.

They can use it to pay for hospital expenses or as capital to meet big business opportunities.

"It is a revolving credit line and the borrower will only pay interest once they take out some of the funds. Others charge a fixed monthly rate, but with Ready Credit, they don't need to pay if they don't need it yet," Tirol explains.

But once part of the money is used, the borrower is charged an interest rate of 3.25 percent monthly.

She says Citibank launched Ready Credit to cater to people who wanted a personal loan they can use as they wished but was not too difficult to get. They also wanted one with very flexible terms such as what Ready Credit provides.

"We believe that there is a big market for loans such as these because there are still many establishments that do not accept credit cards. With Ready Credit, they will have another mode of payment," she says.

Transaction Value: Import valuation system aimed at achieving commercial realities

By MARK A. P. TAMAYO
SGV & Co.

(Second of a series)

TaX-FILES

UNDER the transaction value system, however, the cost component is the price actually paid or payable by the buyer to the seller including certain adjustments paid by the buyer but was not included in the price. These include:

Assists. This particular component refers to the value of certain goods and services supplied, directly or indirectly, by the buyer to the seller free of charge or at a reduced cost.

These goods or services are used in connection with the production and sale for export of the imported goods to the extent that such value has not been incorporated in the price actually paid or payable.

They include materials, components, parts and similar items incorporated in the imported goods; tools, dies, moulds and similar items used in the production of the imported goods; materials consumed in the production of imported goods; and engineering, development, artwork, design work, and plans undertaken elsewhere than in the Philippines and necessary for the production of imported goods.

The value of an assist is based on the acquisition cost if the service or good is acquired by the buyer from an unrelated seller, or the cost of production if produced by the buyer or a person related to the buyer.

Engineering

In the case of engineering, development, artwork, design work and plans, the value is (a) the cost of obtaining copies of the assist, if the assist is available in the public domain; (b) the cost of the purchase or lease, if the assist was bought or leased by the buyer from an unrelated person; (c) the value added outside the Philippines, if the assist was produced in the Philippines.

Having determined the value of an assist, the next step is to prorate that value to the imported merchandise. Various possibilities exist. For example, the value might be apportioned to the first shipment if the importer wishes to pay duty on the entire value at one time.

The importer may also request that the value be apportioned over the number of units produced up to the time of the first shipment, or over the entire anticipated production where contracts or firm commitments exist for that production.

The method of payment of these elements should be in accordance to generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP).

To illustrate: An importer, for instance, provides the producer with a mold to be used in the production of the imported merchandise and contracts to buy 12,000 units. By the arrival of the first shipment of 3,000 units, the producer has already produced 5,000 units.

The importer may request BOC to apportion the value of the mold over 3,000, 5,000, 12,000 units, or any other figure which is in accordance with GAAP.

Royalty or license fees. These fees that the buyer must pay directly or indirectly, as a condition of the sale of the imported merchandise for export to the Philippines, will be included in the transaction value.

Ultimately, a royalty or license fee is subject to duty depending on whether a) the fee bears directly on the goods being imported, such as, when a payment is calculated as a percentage of the price at which the goods are sold or resold, and b) the sale of the goods to the importer is inextricably intertwined with the payment thereof, regardless to whom it is paid and under what circumstances it was paid.

In other words, the matter will have to be decided on a case to case basis.

Certain types of royalties, however, do not qualify as acceptable adjustments, such as charges for the right to reproduce the imported goods in the Philippines; and payments for the right to distribute or resell the imported goods, if not a condition of the sale for export.

Typically, these arrangements involve a lump sum payment that is independent of the selling price or volume of goods imported into the Philippines.

Proceeds of subsequent resale. Any proceeds resulting from the subsequent resale, disposal, or use of the imported goods that accrue, directly or indirectly, to the seller are subject to duties. Thus, for instance, if the importer of the goods is required to pay the supplier an amount of the former's net profit on the resale, the amount thus paid is proper additions to the TV of the imported goods.

Application of TV

The application of the transaction value (TV) of imported goods as the primary method of valuation is subject to certain conditions:

First, there must be evidence of sale for export to the Philippines, such as commercial invoices, contracts and purchase orders. The purpose of this condition is precisely to determine the price that was agreed upon by the buyer and the seller.

Thus, in a no-sale situation, the Bureau of Customs would not be in a position to determine the TV of the imported goods and would instead arrive at a customs value using defined alternative methods allowed under the World Trade Organization rules.

Examples of no-sale situations are: goods shipped on consignment basis (to be sold after importation for the account of the supplier/seller); branch office transfers; leased or loaned goods; countertrade; gifts and promotional samples furnished free of charge.

Second, there must be no restrictions on the disposition or use of the goods by the buyer. A number of factors may have to be taken into consideration to determine whether the restriction has substantially affected the value of imported goods.

Restrictions

These factors include the nature of the restriction of the imported goods, of the industry and its commercial practices, and whether the effect on the value is significant. A restriction that could have a substantial effect on the value of the imported goods is quite unusual. An example would be the case where a machine is sold at a nominal price on condition that the buyer uses it only for charitable purposes.

The rule will not apply if the restrictions are a) imposed by law; b) limited to the geographic area in which the goods may be resold; c) do not substantially affect the value of the goods. Example: where a seller requires a buyer of automobiles not to sell or exhibit them prior to a fixed date that represents the beginning of a model year.

Third, the sale of the goods must not be subject to conditions or considerations that will make it difficult to determine the price. Common examples of this condition are when the buyer and the seller enter into agreements such as package deals or split shipments.

Conditions or considerations relating to the production or marketing of the imported goods shall not, however, result in rejection of the TV.

Fourth, no part of the proceeds of any subsequent resale, disposal or use of the goods by the buyer will accrue, directly or indirectly, to the seller, *unless* an adjustment can be made to the price to account for these proceeds.

Dividends or other payments from the buyer to the seller that do not relate to the imported goods are not part of the customs value.

Fifth, the price of the goods must not be influenced by relationship between the buyer and the seller.

Article 1 of the WTO Valuation Agreement provides that the TV shall be used provided that the buyer and seller are not related. If there is a relationship, it must be shown that this did not influence the price.

Related parties

The buyer and seller are considered related if they are (1) officers or directors of one another's business, (2) legally recognized partners in business, (3) employer and employee, (4) directly or indirectly owning, controlling or holding 5 percent or more of the outstanding stock or shares of both of them, (5) directly or indirectly controls the other, (6) both of them are, directly or indirectly, controlled by a third person, or (7) related by affinity or consanguinity up to the fourth civil degree.

The fact that the buyer and seller are related does not by itself make the TV unacceptable. The relationship, however, alerts the BOC to the fact that there may be a need to review the circumstances surrounding the sale.

There is a similarity between the customs method of valuation and the arm's length standard in transfer pricing rules. It may thus be stated that customs values may, but not necessarily, indicate an arm's length outcome.

There are two ways of establishing the acceptability of a TV. *First*, the circumstances surrounding the sale shall be examined to determine whether the relationship influenced the price. In such case, the importer should be given an opportunity to supply additional information to allow the BOC to examine the transaction.

Secondly, the importer shall be given the opportunity to demonstrate that the TV closely approximates a *test value*, which, according to CMO No. 2-99, may be based on the TV of identical or similar goods previously accepted by the BOC.

Whether one value "closely approximates" another value depends on several factors that may include the nature of the imported goods, industry, the season in which the goods are imported, and whether the difference in values is commercially significant.

Since these factors may vary from case to case, it would be impossible to apply a uniform standard such as a fixed percentage, in each case.

The test values are alternatives to the relationship criterion. If one of the test values is met, it is not necessary to examine the question of whether the relationship influenced the price.

These circumstances will prevent the use of the TV as the primary method of valuation because their existence is deemed to have distorted the price agreed upon by the buyer and seller. In such case, the next basis of value will be considered.

Alternative methods

There are six methods allowed under the WTO Valuation Agreement. In situations where the TV (Method 1) cannot be used as basis for determining customs value, the rules provide five alternative reference values to arrive at a customs value. To be applied in a prescribed hierarchical order, the alternate values are: (1) TV of Identical Goods, (2) TV of Similar Goods, (3) Deductive Value, (4) Computed Value or cost of production method, and (5) Fallback Value.

Based on the provision of R.A. No. 8181, the use of these references is not optional. The use of these values is allowed only if the Commissioner of Customs has reason to doubt the truth or accuracy of the declared value of the importation and is not satisfied with the explanation being offered by the importer in case of such doubt.

Absent such condition, the transaction value of the goods when sold for export to the Philippines shall be used as the basis for the cost component of the taxable value.

Method 2 & 3: TV of Identical or Similar Goods. If the BOC cannot determine customs value using the TV method, the customs value shall be determined based on the TV of identical goods (Method 2) for export to the Philippines (at about the same time) at the same commercial level and in substantially the same quantities as the goods being valued.

To be comparable identical goods, the goods must, except for minor differences, be the same in all material respects, including physical characteristics, quality and reputation. Moreover, identical goods must already have an established TV.

If Method 2 fails, the customs value shall be based on the TV of similar goods (Method 3). This involves finding a shipment of similar goods (produced in the same country) where a TV can or has been already established. Similar goods refer to goods that are functionally and commercially interchangeable with the imported goods in quality and in reputation.

In both Methods 2 and 3, the imported items must be produced by the same producer of the goods being valued. Only if there are no imports of identical or similar goods from the same producer at about the same time can the goods produced by someone else be used. The producer, however, must still be from the same country.

In addition, if there are two or more lots of comparable identical or similar goods with different unit prices, the lowest unit price must be used. Necessary adjustments can be made for differences in trade level, freight, cost of insurance and quantity.

Method 4: Deductive Value. This method arrives at a customs value by working backward from the established selling price per unit.

Method 5: Computed Value. Computed value determines the customs value based on the production cost of the goods, plus an amount for profit and general expenses usually reflected in sales from the exporting country to the Philippines of goods of the same class or kind.

This method is rarely used and restricted in scope. It can only apply if the goods to be valued are exported directly by the producer or manufacturer and not through intermediary. This is because the method for arriving at an acceptable customs value involves computing the overseas manufacturer's own production costs, information of which is not likely freely available.

Upon an importer's request, Method 5 can be applied before Method 4. This, however, is subject to the approval of the Commissioner of Customs.

Method 6: Fallback Value. This method is known as the "flexible valuation method" and is applicable when all the other methods have failed to arrive at an acceptable customs value. It requires the BOC to review previous valuation methods in their original order, with a view to finding a value by reasonable means without resorting to capricious or arbitrary methods.

In other words, it permits the use in combination of any of the alternate methods for as long as it is consistent with the general principles of the WTO valuation.

An example would be the importation (free of charge) of sample goods accompanied by documents showing a realistic value for customs purposes. Because there is no contract of sale, there can be no TV. Thus, if Methods 2 to 5 likewise fail, the fallback value applies and the documented customs value could be accepted.

(To be continued)

Waterford crystal shatters its stuffy image

WATERFORD, Ireland—Waterford crystal—it's not just for grandmothers anymore.

The hand-cut goblets and bowls that earned Waterford a reputation for old-fashioned but stuffy elegance have spawned an unrecognizably hip family of housewares.

Abstract thumbprints and stylized Chinese characters adorn a new generation of Waterford glassware, and the brand now graces table linens, bone china, even fancy pens.

Waterford Wedgwood Plc. has also shown a taste for acquisitions. Within the past two years alone, it has snapped up All-Clad Metalcrafters Inc., a maker of premium cookware based in Canonsburg, Pa., and two German ceramics brands.

This diversification is a major departure for a handicrafts business with roots two centuries deep in the verdant pasturelands of southeastern Ireland.

"We must do things that would make our predecessors turn in their graves," said Waterford Wedgwood president Redmond O'Donoghue.

The company struggled with soaring costs and weak sales in the early 1990s. Under chairman Tony O'Reilly, former chairman of H.J. Heinz Co., it slashed its work force and doubled sales over five years.

Revenue for Waterford Wedgwood, which includes English chinamaker Wedgwood, jumped 30 percent during the first six months of 2000 to a record $424 million, and interim operating profits swelled 38 percent to $28 million.

Sales of crystal and ceramics grew 18 percent each over the same period in 1999, while sales of All-Clad and other nontraditional items more than tripled.

Analysts say a catalyst for this improvement has been the company's success in broadening its appeal beyond its traditional clientele, both by extending its existing brands and acquiring new ones.

"We don't think it's there yet, but it's making all the right moves," said John Sheehan of NCB Stockbrokers in Dublin.

O'Donoghue acknowledged that Waterford Wedgwood used to rely too much on sales to the elderly.

"We decided we were going to get into bed with a designer who was going to give us an explanation of what is contemporary," he said.

Waterford crystal found a partner in prominent Irish fashion designer John Rocha. By 1997 his minimalist creations were cropping up in shops among the company's more conventional glassware. Sales of Rocha crystal surged 75 percent in 1999 and continued to grow during the first half of last year.

Other designer alliances followed. For Waterford crystal's subsidiary Stuart & Sons, Jasper Conran designed a trendy motif resembling embossed spaghetti. Rosenthal, a German porcelain subsidiary, collaborates with Italian fashion house Versace.

Although Waterford Wedgwood doesn't disclose interim financial results for each of its product lines, Sheehan of NCB says combined sales for Rocha and Conran glassware comprised 4 percent of the company's crystal business during the first half of last year. Though modest, this share is increasing, he says.

Americans are Waterford Wedgwood's biggest customers, accounting for almost half of overall company sales. In fact, Waterford crystal owes much of its reputation for quality to its devoted following in the United States.

Irish families emigrating to North America in the 19th century sometimes took a piece of Waterford crystal with them as a memento of their homeland. When the company returned to production in the 1950s after a century of dormancy, sales were stoked by this "folk memory," maintained over several generations, executives say.

In a symbol of its status in the United States, Waterford designed and built the Times Square Millennium Ball used to herald the year 2000 in New York.

Yet it was only recently that Waterford began publicly embracing its Irishness.

"Ireland would not have been the best kind of association if you wanted to market something as being a luxury product," said company spokesman Michael Dennehy. "It had the reputation of 'pigs in the parlor' (and) backwardness."

The breakneck growth of Ireland's economy—10 percent expansion last year—has changed that. Today the Waterford crystal factory, with its affable glassblowers and cutters, is the country's fourth most visited tourist attraction.

O'Donoghue, a former marketing director for Ford Motor Co., has a vision to make Waterford Wedgwood's reputation even grander—to expand beyond "tabletop" goods into a diversified luxury goods business on a par with Burberry, Gucci and Louis Vuitton.

"It's no secret that we have a hunger, certainly an appetite, for acquisitions," he said.

Among O'Donoghue's possible targets are companies that make leather luggage, watches or jewelry.

"If you could get into a business like luggage, you could be in a sales pool of several billion dollars. All you'd need is 10 percent," he said.

But Waterford Wedgwood's dependence on the US market is also a potential weakness.

Asked to identify the biggest risk to his business, O'Donoghue offered a blunt response: "Not a doubt in the world. An American recession." *AP*

Can business . . .

(From page C1)

animal testing. Or opt to buy another brand of liquor because they are against the politics of the manufacturer's chairman of the board. Or choose not to fly a particular airline because the owner does not pay his taxes.

Perhaps "advocacy-consumerism" will achieve faster and with more emphasis, what globalization and competition is doing at snail's pace: improving the product, and with it raising the bar on ethical business practices.

If every major advertiser saves .05 percent of his gross sales for an advocacy communications of any chosen cause, maybe this country can graduate from being one of the "armpits" of the world. As a leading columnist once wrote, "the darkest corner in hell is reserved for fence sitters." Be an advocate, and invest in heaven. Last I heard, it's still very blue chip. *(The author is the head of Campaigns Advocacy & PR Inc., and group chair of Campaigns & Grey, one of the country's leading ad agencies.)*

SELLING DIRECT TO CLIENTS

Electronics firm tries to beat competition

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

INSTEAD of working through agents like other Japanese firms, electronics manufacturer Matsushita Electric Co. Ltd. has opened a local subsidiary—Panasonic Industrial Sales Philippines (PISP)—to sell industrial machine and computer components directly to companies in economic zones.

MARKETING STRATEGY

The move is aimed at giving the Japanese electronic giant an edge over its rivals that operate through local agents in capturing a bigger chunk of the growing local market for industrial machine and computer chips.

By moving closer to its potential clients, PISP president Yoshikazu Tanaka says the company would meet the specific needs of export oriented firms faster.

"Speed is essential in this business because a delay could affect sales of a product. By the time it reaches the market, a new product might have taken its place," Tanaka says.

Tanaka explains that Matsushita put up an industrial sales subsidiary in the Philippines because it has become an important production base for Japanese computer companies like Toshiba and Fujitsu.

Matsushita has an industrial sales subsidiary in Hong Kong that serves Mainland China; in Singapore which serves Asean countries and Europe; and South Korea.

"We believe that we cannot serve our clients from Singapore because it would take a three-hour flight to get here. Most vendors of industrial machine operate through agents who have to coordinate with their regional headquarters before they can finalize a sale. This is unacceptable to most clients," Tanaka says.

At least a third of PISP's sales are expected to come from machines that are used for automation. Tanaka says that with a local subsidiary, Matsushita could help companies plan their factory building and provide regular maintenance for their machines.

Tanaka says PISP would also sell batteries, motors, and electric components, devices and peripherals which computer makers in ecozones use for their final products. "Matsushita has close ties with research and development facilities of computer makers from Japan and this allows us to build components to the companies' specification," Tanaka says.

Tanaka says PISP is also tapping the local market for factory automation machine and compressors. PISP also carries a broader product portfolio that Tanaka said makes the company the preferred choice of buyers.

"We like to think of ourselves as a department store where electronics manufacturers go and choose their products," Tanaka says.

Matsushita has earmarked P50 million in capital for its office at the Laguna Technopark that has 39 employees.

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BUSINESS Friday

Asian consumer sentiments mixed amid recession fears

SINGAPORE—Singaporeans and Chinese are the most upbeat Asian consumers while Japanese, Taiwanese and South Koreans are the gloomiest in the region amid fears of a new recession.

Credit card giant Mastercard International said it found big differences in consumer confidence from country to country in its MasterIndex poll in 13 Asia-Pacific markets last December.

"The most interesting observation from the latest MasterIndex is that there is no apparent single trend in consumer confidence across the region," senior vice president Stuart McDonald said in a statement.

While previous surveys showed events in one country had a considerable impact on its neighbors, the latest poll revealed that "widespread political, economic and social changes resulted in a greater impact on a domestic level, rather than region wide."

Recession fears

During the 1997-98 financial crisis in Asia, day-to-day events in one economy had an immediate impact on the region, particularly in the foreign exchange market. Regional volatility has since eased, but there are fears of a new recession with the US economy slowing down.

With 100 as the best possible rating for consumer confidence in the MasterIndex survey, Singapore topped the field with a score of 84.2, followed by China at 78.6, the highest since China was included in the survey in 1996.

"China is the only market in the region to record a consistent rise in its MasterIndex scores over the past six survey periods," MasterCard said.

Consumers in China's commercial capital Shanghai "manifest the most upbeat outlook for the next six months," compared to their counterparts in the other cosmopolitan centers, Beijing and Guangzhou.

The survey asked 5,521 consumers about their expectations regarding employment, the economy, regular income, the stock market and quality of life.

Third in the rankings was New Zealand at 68.4, followed by Malaysia at 67.4, Hong Kong 67.2, India 60.4, Thailand 59.7, Indonesia 54.1, Australia 44.6, the Philippines 35.5, South Korea 25.9, Taiwan 21.7 and Japan 13.9.

The survey was conducted before the recent changes of government in Thailand and the Philippines.

Deeply pessimistic

On Japan, the statement said the current rating was less than half the previous reading of 33.4 and the lowest since December 1998. Respondents were "deeply pessimistic" about employment and regular income.

Yuwa Hendrick-Wong, executive vice president of research outfit Strategic Intelligence, said the survey showed consumer confidence now plays a "critical role" in the economic fortunes of Asian countries.

More of the region's future growth will have to come from rising consumption, rather than exports and foreign investment, he said.

Governments will have to "achieve a careful balance between continuing economic reform to build a more open, entrepreneurial and consumer-focused domestic market, while avoiding the worst of structural dislocations that impact on consumer sentiments and confidence," he said.

"The divergence shown in the MasterIndex survey clearly reflects the differing degrees of success by the region's governments in this regard," he added.

AFP

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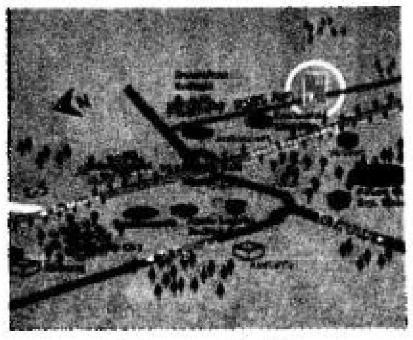

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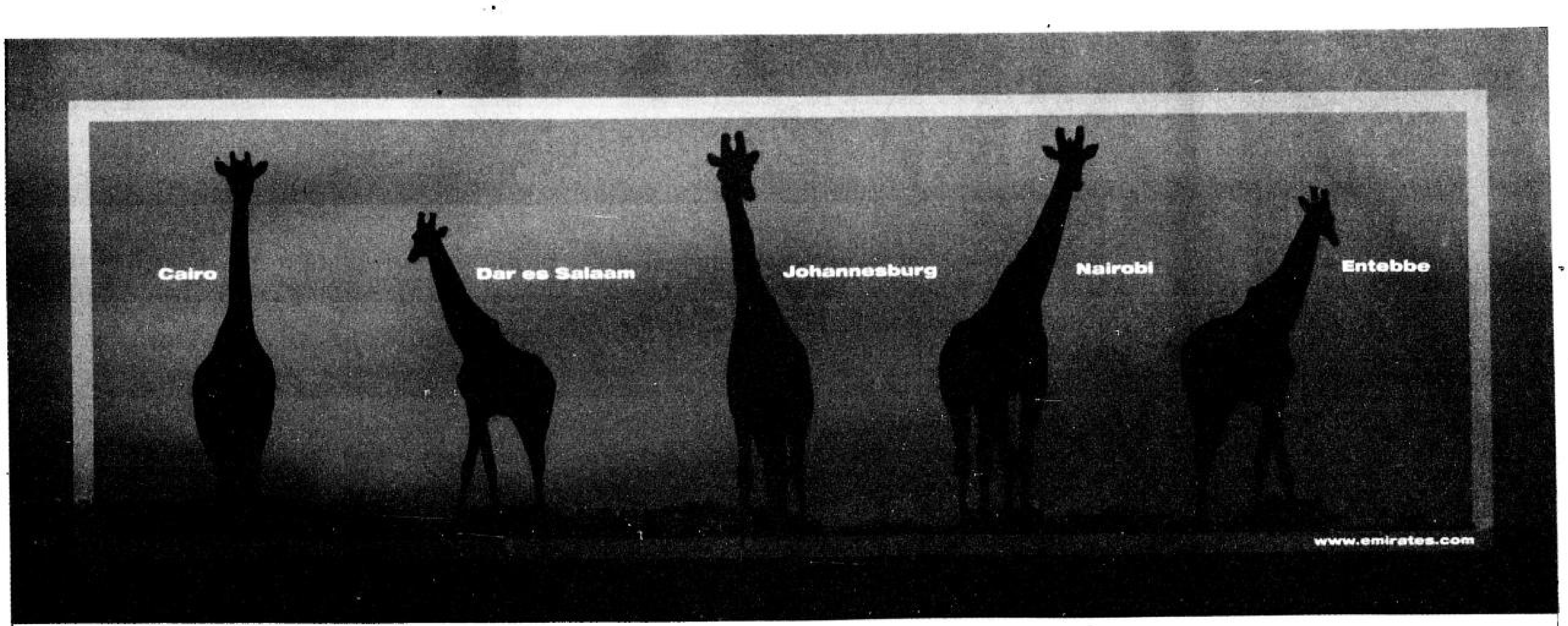

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Trend Captains

LIFESTYLE

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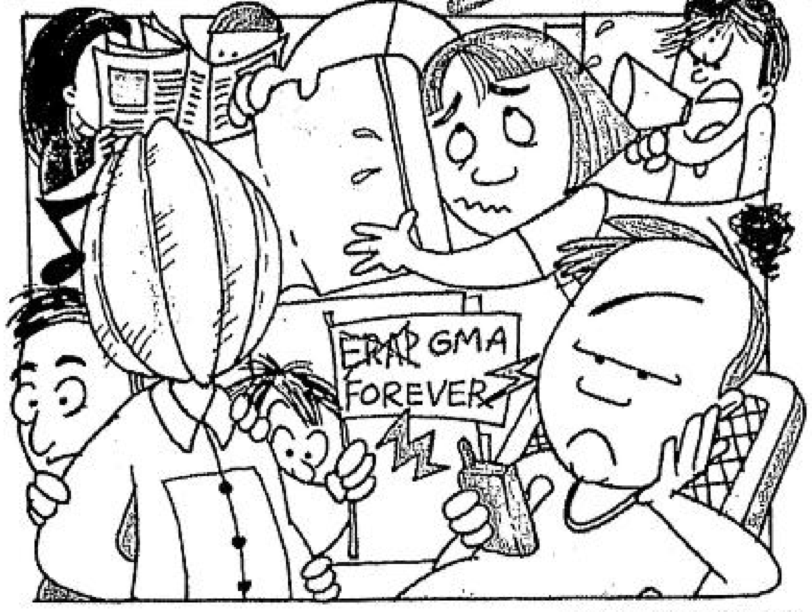

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WHAT'S ON AT ROBINSONS

FAMILY FUN WEEKENDS

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Post-Edsa II lifestyle

THERE'S no getting off the roller coaster yet—from Edsa II we're swooping right into the elections. This is what our post-People Power II lifestyle is like:

Withdrawal syndrome. I hear friends say that suddenly there's no Trial to watch in the afternoon. TV is back to soap, the real one. For a time, people built their schedules around the Trial, its cast of characters and the juicy discussions after it. Since then, we have realized we could never be the same dopey televiewers again for we discovered how we could be enlightened, even empowered, just by watching the political proceedings nonstop. From hereon, people will be looking forward to TV—even only cable TV—to bring to our homes and offices the Senate or House proceedings if only to let us monitor who among these honorable elected officials are making sense—or at least, staying awake. It is not a bad move for TV networks, starting with the government-owned station, to explore this popular idea, and perhaps even get sponsors for it. The Trial provoked the people's curiosity for their legislators' actual and consistent performance. Now the people will be watching. We should never be dumb again. If we can't stop comedians from being elected, at least we can monitor them doing or not doing their homework, and we can count their yawns. That's when popularity ratings can be validated by a vigilant audience. This is a no-sweat use of media technology to educate people, without having to preach. Just by locking in those eyeballs to the TV screen.

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

It's back to generic text jokes, but at least, we'll never be as dumb again

Back to old text. Don't you miss the **Miriam** and **Tessie O** jokes? Now it's back to generic jokes.

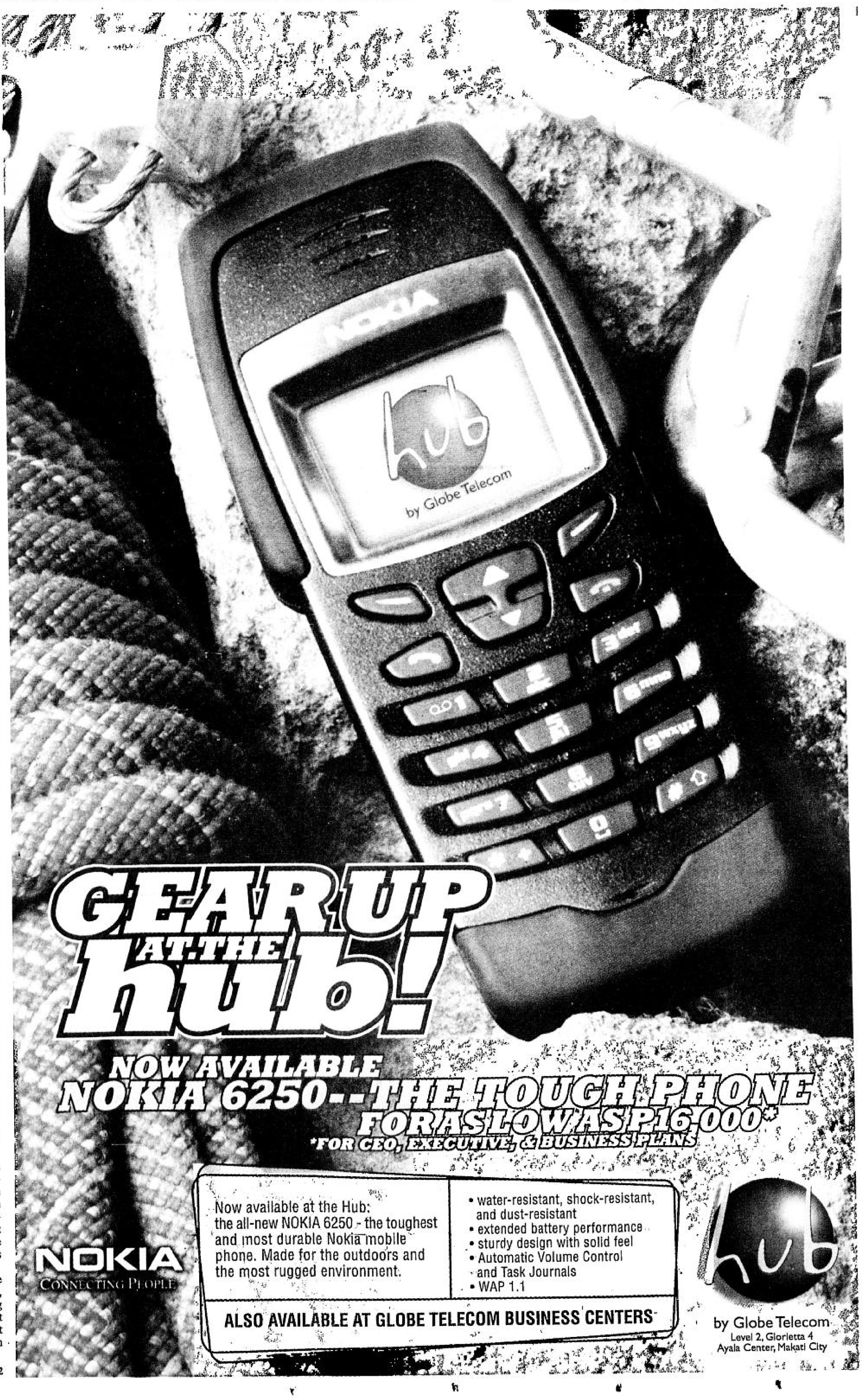
***"Balimbing"* on AM.** It's a 360-degree turn for many radio hosts, and even for other media persons, who are now desperately trying to deodorize their stinking image. It drives home an oft-ignored lesson: credibility is what makes media sell. Journalism is a profession of public trust. Taint your credibility and you lose your market. Hard to fake objectivity. Harder still to fool people who, while they're initially taken in by sleekness and glibness, get discerning somehow at some point.

The young are alive. And awake. This week in an open forum at San Beda by the Management and Entrepreneurship Circle of the Philippines (composed of students from San Beda, Miriam College and St. Paul's College), a student asked us: "Media say we shouldn't vote for just entertainers, but media feature a lot of celebrities and media people who run get more exposure on TV than other candidates." That wasn't a question, that was a statement straight from the mouth of babes. They may be revved up for weekend gimmicks, but the young are also talking their brains off. After Edsa II, they can't be confined to their rave parties.

Civil society. Suddenly we all belong to a civil society who insists on being heard. **Liwayway Vinzons Chato** told us in the same forum that what emboldened her to run, aside from being a member of the very active and widespread Couples for Christ, is the optimism that "now, civil society will bring us to where we should go. We had to see the mess for ourselves so we could clean it up."

Idealism and optimism aside, she could be right. Just this week, a group of women who, before Edsa II were just part of a Loose Eating Club (their version of Ladies Who Lunch), sent me an enlightening fax on why we shouldn't stop at being "concerned citizens," but move on to becoming "good citizens."

POST-EDSA/ p.D2



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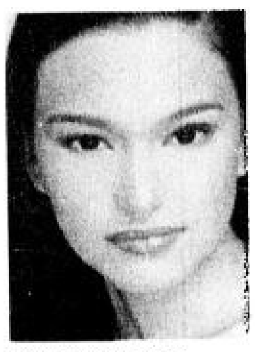
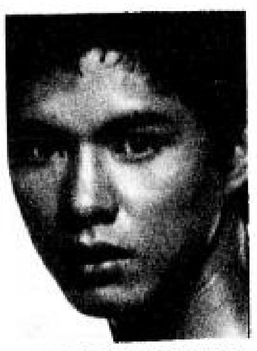
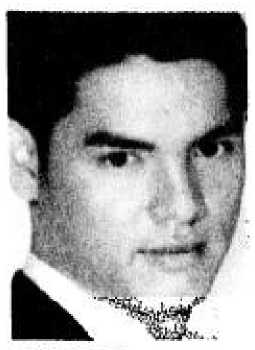

VERNS Buckley

JAY CO. Martial arts expert did a movie with Jackie Chan.

LEE GILES. Exotic


DERRICK HIBALER. Going international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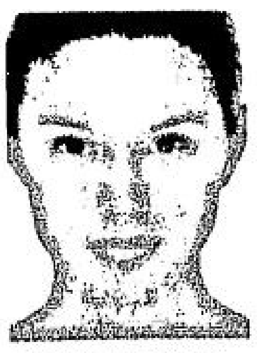
TERESA HERRERA. Batting for Hollywood.


BIANCA ARANETA. Beauty is in the genes.

ANNA GARCIA. Small but marketable

. **SARAH** Meier takes after her mother, Electrika, Calcarrie's directress of the training division.

Electric shock on the ramp

BY MARGE C. ENRIQUEZ

As chief trainer of Calcarrie models, Electrika, one of the few models who defined the '70s, makes lightning strike twice in the new millennium

SHE started out by leaving a strong impression on people and has made a career out of it. Today former model Electrika has been advising aspirants on how to make the same good first impression. At 48, the directress of the training division of Calcarrie Modeling Agency has not only helped young people in finding style but also careers that are right for them. Among her successful talents are former Supermodel of the Philippines Nina Naval, present Supermodel Joan de Mesa, Teresa Herrera, Verns Buckley, Bianca Araneta and her daughter Sarah Meier.

Thin as a wire

Electrika's modeling career started out as a fluke. After finishing medical technology at the Philippine Women's University in 1975, Josephine Chavez Go went hunting for a job. During a prospect check in one building, inside the elevator, she met Sol Jose Vanzi who looked up to the 5'9" Go and asked, "Do you want to be a model?"

Go went to Vanzi's boutique. Suddenly a man wearing a bathrobe peeped from the doorway. "Is that her?" he asked Vanzi. "You're my type!" he told Go. The man turned out to be designer and model broker Dante Ramirez (who is now a language interpreter in the Bay Area). They were instant friends. She went to his place where she was dressed up. A week later, pictures of a dark Oriental model were splashed all over the papers. Phones never stopped ringing for pictorials and fashion shows.

Go's professional name started out as a joke. People teased her for being so skinny that she could balance on an electric wire. Thus, she was christened Electrika. In those days, magazines and designers favored the haughty, virginal mestiza model. Electrika and other Dante Ramirez models bucked the trend. They were dusky, exotic and literally electrified the audiences with their piercing looks.

Ramirez taught his models to be confident, disciplined and to emote on the ramp and in front of the cameras. Some fashionistas believe that the best crop of models came from the '70s. Designers honed the skills of their models and made strong personalities out of them.

ELECTRIKA, as photographed by Wahoo Guerrero, in the mannish look designed by Azabache in 1977. Popular in the late '70s, the butch chic is back.

Working abroad

Electrika worked with Auggie Cordero, Oskar Atendido, Romulo Estrada, Tony Cajucom, Joe Salazar, Ernest Santiago and Cesar Gaupo. When foreign collections by Dior, Oleg Cassini, Jean Patou, Hanae Mori and Leonard of Paris were shown in Manila, the dusky types were in demand.

A highlight in her career was being the signature model of the forward-looking collection of Helena Carratala Guerrero. In 1976, the Spanish designer, who was then married to businessman-photographer Wahoo Guerrero, made waves with her avant-garde ready-to-wear designs. Whenever she wore a dress from the store, the style would be the first to get off the rack.

Guerrero's photography was considered cutting-edge then. When Electrika went to Hong Kong to show her tear sheets, the agencies were surprised at the level of sophistication in the fashion scene.

During a holiday in Paris, Electrika tried her luck in the modeling scene. Modeling composite cards were unheard of in the Philippines. These cards gave clients an idea how models looked in various moods and styles. Agencies were appalled that she had never heard of a composite card. But Electrika wasn't easily let down.

One day the enterprising model walked into a Japanese design house, was booked for a week and was paid handsomely. At least she could tell her designer friends that she had worked in Paris.

Electrika lived in Hong Kong for 14 years. She met and married Swiss businessman Antoine Meier. They have two children Sarah, 19, and Albert Alexander, 12. She continued modeling in the territory until the age of 39. Electrika would carry the infant Sarah in a basket and breastfeed her between shoots. That was her daughter's early exposure to modeling. Today, Sarah is one of the busiest models in Calcarrie with bookings abroad.

Success is earned

When the Meiers moved to Manila, Electrika continued her career in the business of appearance and presentation. Using her natural gifts on public relations, she helped John Robert Powers strengthen its image and win corporate accounts.

But she wasn't cut out for the 9-to-5 ground. Electrika was invited to join Calcarrie International Models Philippines, run by Joey and Audie Espino. Since her greatest talent was in her organizing ability, she established the training division. She also strengthened the agency's ties with the media. Even if the models were paid abysmal rates by the publications, Electrika got many of her models on the cover. Exposure was part of a model's training.

In the past two years, she painstakingly organized modules, seminars, schedules and careers. The most essential course is learning about the self. A psychologist with a doctorate degree teaches the personality enhancement course. After learning the basics such as photographic and runway modeling and deportment, the advance students takes up acting, communications and broadcasting. They start building their modeling portfolios as they work with makeup artists and photographers.

Anna Garcia, one of the aspirants, says the training program enabled her to discover her hidden talents. In her communications class, she became more conscious of her diction and enunciation.

When she played the lead role in a short film, Anna didn't realize that her acting could move people, including the directress. "All my inhibitions were gone. Now I can act whatever is required of me!" she declared.

Learning to sashay on the runway in 3-inch heels was a killer. At 5'2" she's vertically challenged in the modeling world. A classmate remarked that Anna wouldn't have any use for the modeling course since ramp models are over 5'7".

"Although I was hurt for a moment by her insensitive comment, I have proven to myself that ramp modeling is not about height, but it is the total performance," says Anna.

Many of the trainees attribute their success to the personality enhancement program because it helps boost their self-esteem.

"My training works," Anna says. There's one precept that all her models live by: *Labor vincit omnia* (Nothing beats hard work).

Calcarrie is conducting courses for aspiring models and for people who just want to gain confidence. Call 844-0350. Located at Suite 1514 Herrera Tower, 98 Herrera St., Salcedo Village, Makati City

Going Swiss

SWISS watchmaker Grovana offers an interesting gift idea. Take advantage of a 10-percent discount on purchases of his and hers Grovana watches today until March 31.

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Grovana is a world-renowned name in the watchmaking industry. The company is known for its quality and accuracy. Grovana has been producing analog quartz watches since the 1970s. It exports watches to more than 80 countries and Grovana collections are featured in watchmaking industry fairs all over the world.

Grovana watches are available at all Rustan's Department Stores.

Post-Edsa II lifestyle

(From page D1)

I quote some portions: "We cannot expect others to respect us if we do not respect ourselves. The most visible display of our disrespect for ourselves and lack of accountability as citizens is our behavior on the streets, especially in Manila, where sadly, we are at our worst and most lawless behaviors."

It raises a good point. "If there is a lesson to be learned from the two Edsas, it is that the salaries of people in government and public service are woefully inadequate and totally out of sync with reality. Must we, Filipinos, affirm the negative by doggedly insisting that once elected or appointed into public office, our politicians and civil servants will automatically 'steal anyway,' and therefore, don't deserve to be paid fair and just wages? Would not a pay scale commensurate to the position they occupy promote integrity and sense of pride in doing an honest day's work for an honest day's pay, leading to a committed, not *kumitid* public service? In advanced societies, government service is the envy of the private sector. They offer the best pay and enviable package that is the yardstick against which the pay scale and benefits in the private sector are measured. As a result, the private sector is compelled to compete with government for the best brains, who for their part, do not have to make a major sacrifice in opting to serve their country."

These women led by ex-HK-based journalist **Blanche Gallardo**, columnist **Lydia Castillo**, **Pacita Almario**, **Evelyn Sebastian Peplow**, **Dette Pascual**, **Aida D'Orazio** and **Salud Ibanez** are forming a group that will be active in watching the Senate, the House and other elected officials. That's the path they choose after Edsa II—something proactive coming out of their socializing.

Civil society is the surprise strength deriving from People Power II.

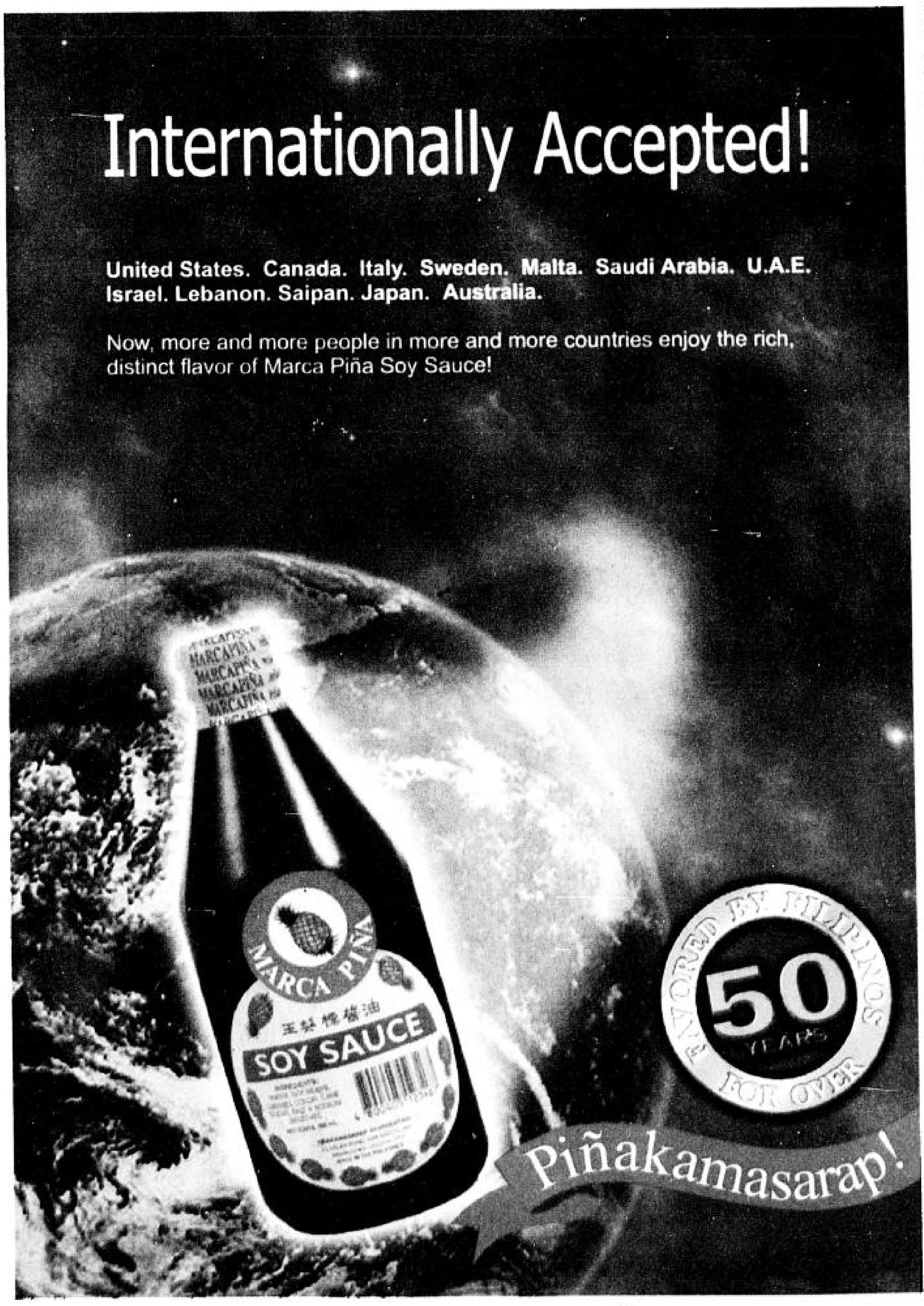
Back to Valentine's. Metro Manila's nightlife was a graveyard before Edsa II. Now, the crush is back—so obvious in the rush of shows at Valentine's and after. This weekend, people are looking forward to **Nick Joaquin**'s play "Pinoy Agonistes" at Greenbelt, and the social and cultural calendar unfurls. Next week, the Japanese Cinema Masterpieces series opens with **Kon Ichikawa**'s "Makioka Sisters" (Feb. 27, Shangri-La Mall), a project of Japan Foundation Manila Office with Shangri-La Plaza. **Kurosawa**'s "Hidden Fortress" (which inspired "Star Wars") is part of the series.

Back to dining. Libis. Pearl Drive. Power Plant. J.Nakpil. Adriatico. Again, parking space is like a needle in a haystack. Some choose to go off the resto communities and choose "stand-alones," such as Henry's on Boni Avenue in Mandaluyong, a fave destination these days of people who just want to eat eclectic. Even Cubao is getting its share of chic but good dining now that **Margarita Fores** has opened her Café Bola there with its novel take on good old Filipino (imagine pasta with Vigan *longganisa*).

Some go a step further. You've heard of enterprising chefs or hostesses opening up their dining rooms for private functions. Now the vogue are the chefs-for-hire; they go to your place and whip up their specialties in your kitchen for small parties. Our writer and July bride **Penny Daza** is still raving about the dinner she had with her in-laws-to-be where an expert Malate cook, **Emily Jamito**, for a cool P700 (without groceries and ingredients), prepared a dinner for 15 people—consisting of vegetarian pasta, red snapper in lemon-butter sauce, beef stew, mustard vignairette salad, mini pizza and desserts. That's a culinary treat at a bargain.

Yup, the people are recovering their lifestyle but with a difference. This time they have their ear to the ground, and their eyes locked on their avowed public servants who this time should know better than to just live it up.

E-mail the author at tsanjuan@link.com.ph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PARIS provided the perfect close to the Spring 2001collections, leaving little doubt that the City of Light is the place for truly innovative and inspirational fashion.

Paris' success is based on its ability to nurture and embrace pure talent

Even commercial designers like Marc Jacobs at Louis Vuitton proved that big backing and creative design can happily coexist.

A multitude of trends emerged from both the avant-garde and the establishment. Expect to see plenty of military looks for spring, next to the season's must-have short, gathered, asymmetric dresses. The military influence is seen in the piped buttonhole tables, braided ornamental enclosures, bomber jackets with sports epaulettes and severely tailored coats and jackets.

For Louis Vuitton leathergoods, Jacobs and Stephen Sprouse introduced Day-Glo graffiti.

INDIAN army outfit with standup collar

MARC Jacobs' figure-hugging military jacket with balloon skirt

BEIGE suit with flaps, wide buttons and military buckle

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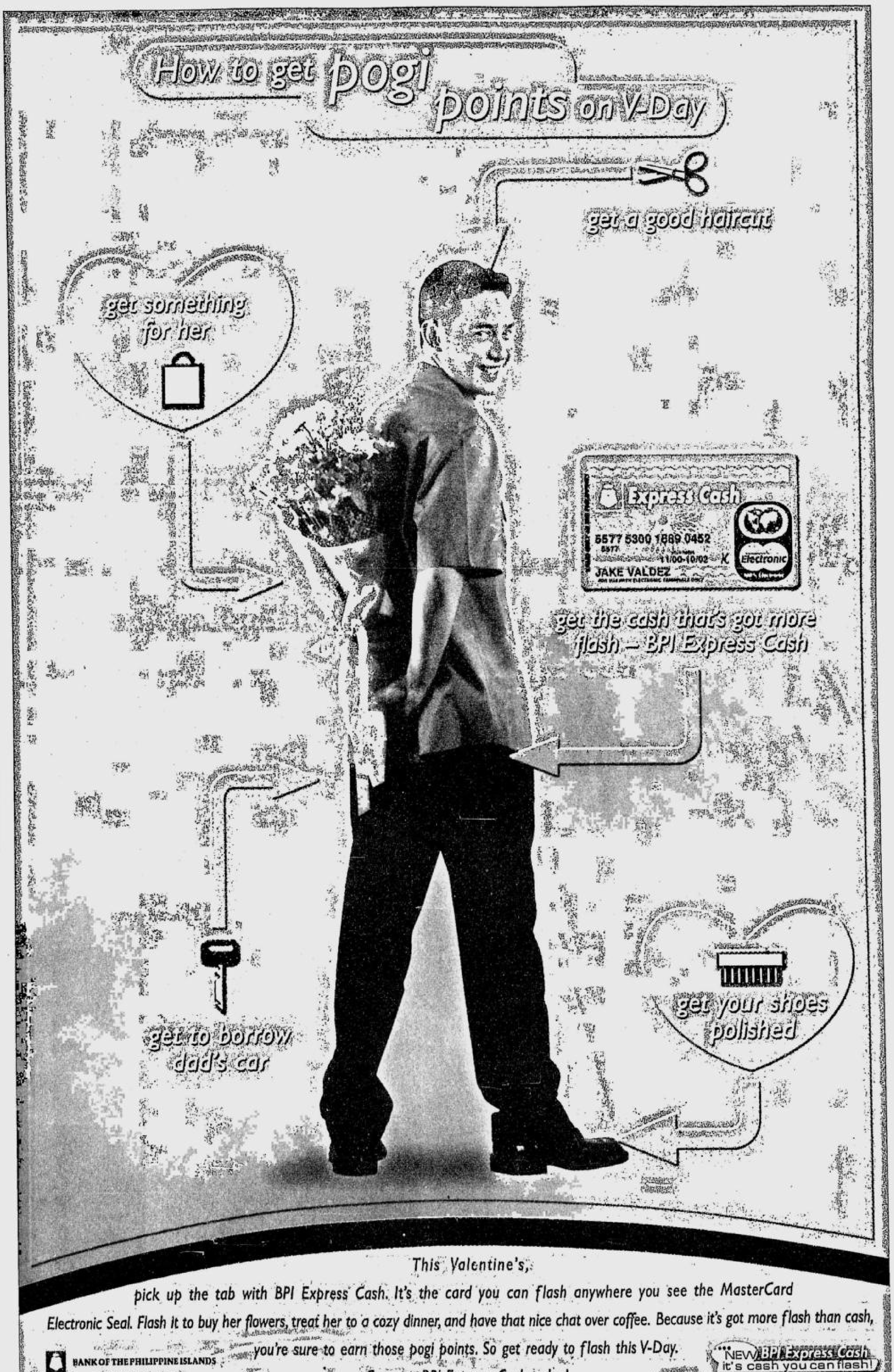

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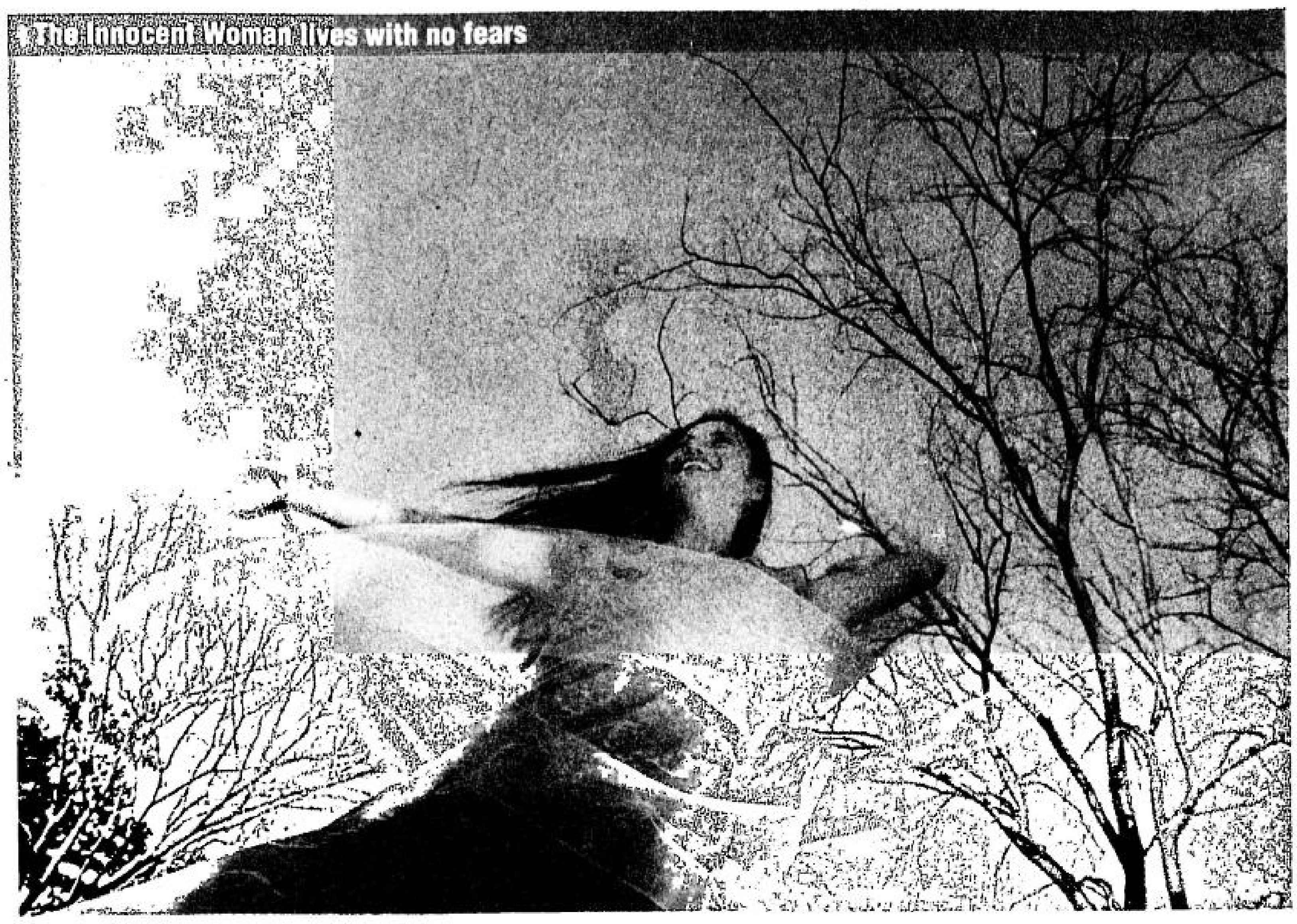
Four faces of women

PHOTOS BY RAYMOND LAUCHENGCO

They need to go back to the end of all their exploring—original innocence



The Innocent Woman lives with no fears

THERE was a beautiful little girl. Her spirit shone like the multiple rays of the sun.

In her eyes one would find a natural interest in new things, a curiosity that took her into the unknown. This was the joy of learning, the art of living. She had no awareness of danger, and no concept of what it meant to stay safe. Hers was a joyous life.

She was free. She was powerful. She was Innocence.

Before long, the adults who journeyed with her in life began to fear for her safety. They yearned to protect her, to keep her innocence clean and safe, beyond the impure intentions of others. And so they began to put up fences, invisible boundaries to keep the malicious ones at bay. Other adults felt the same about their Innocent Ones and so all the adults started to agree on communal rules and regulations.

The traditions became law and the law was not to be broken. Soon everyone forgot the reason for the rules, but only remembered the rules themselves. With good intention they were stifling enough; without good intention, the rules became like a noose to strangle.

The not so innocent ones rebelled. They mustered their courage and held their vision of freedom. They felt relief. At least they didn't have to follow those senseless rules any more. Indeed they began to make up rules themselves. New rules, modern rules. Rules that kept the past out. Rules that denied the old traditions. They constructed boundaries of separation and distaste. They thought they were free. And they were not. They had created a revolution that set them back to where they began. They had built their own prison. They were blind to the bars they had welded. They were lost.

And when they were very, very tired women, when they couldn't be any more lost than they were, any more desperate or hopeless, only then did the ego allow them to listen to the quiet Voice of Innocence. At the point when all seemed completely without purpose, purpose was revealed.

They were told of their eternal self, the one of truth within. That beautiful self had always been there, occasionally leaping out to play, only to be sent away with a terse word calling for serious maturity. They were told that this self is the power to change the world, that indeed if enough of these women could unlock the door and let this one of truth live fully in their life, then that gentle force of Innocence would transform everything.

They needed a Supreme Source of pure energy from which they could draw the strength to make the journey back to their Innocent selves. They came to live in the experience of their Innocence with the protective and liberating powers from the Source. They made others like themselves and they changed their world.

They were filled with joy.

BESSIE is wearing a lilac paisely V-neck ruffled dress by Viseversa

The Traditional Woman is bound by convention

WHAT can be more conventional than a Yankee blue pin-striped suit by Anne Klein, papaya cropped sleeveless knit shirt by Episode and Tubogas Monte Carlo yellow gold and steel bracelet by Bulgari.

The Modern Woman throws caution to the wind

BE hip in a tangerine peasant knit top with an elastic arm detail and fatigue tie-front paper bag waist skirt, by Calvin Klein. Team it with black square-toed lace-up shoes by Nine West and Scuba GMT watch by Bulgari

BRIGHTEN up a staid navy suit with violet Anne Klein t-strapped shoes

The Enlightened Woman is at peace with herself

LOOK serene in a starlight panelled gown with plastic straps by Anne Klein teamed with black, strappy sequined shoes by Nine West and Abbraccio pendant in 18k yellow gold with round diamonds and doppio cuare earrings in 18k yellow gold with round diamonds, both by Bulgari

CREDITS
MODEL: BESSIE BADILLA-DEL CASTILLO
FASHION STYLING BY RINA GO
HAIR AND MAKEUP BY VICTOR ORTEGA
AND LOURD RAMOS FOR TENG ROMA OF
EMPHASIS SALON, ROCKWELL CENTER

Second NVM Awards now open

THE NVM Awards is now open to all Filipino writers in English in two categories: the best published short story of the year and the best published first short story of a writer. The first category carries the grand prize of P50,000, and the second, for a writer's first published short story, P25,000. All short stories in English published within the period of Oct. 1, 2000 to Sept. 30, are eligible. The deadline for submission is Sept. 30. Call Mrs. Narita Gonzalez, 929-1663.

The Awards honor the late National Artist for Literature NVM Gonzalez's abiding love for the short story, and seeks to preserve and encourage excellence in this genre among Filipinos who forever altered the course of Filipino writing in English.

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No.0064, Series of 2001

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CORY QUIRINO - Host of *Citiline* and Author of *Forever Young* (Imedeen user for 2 yrs.)

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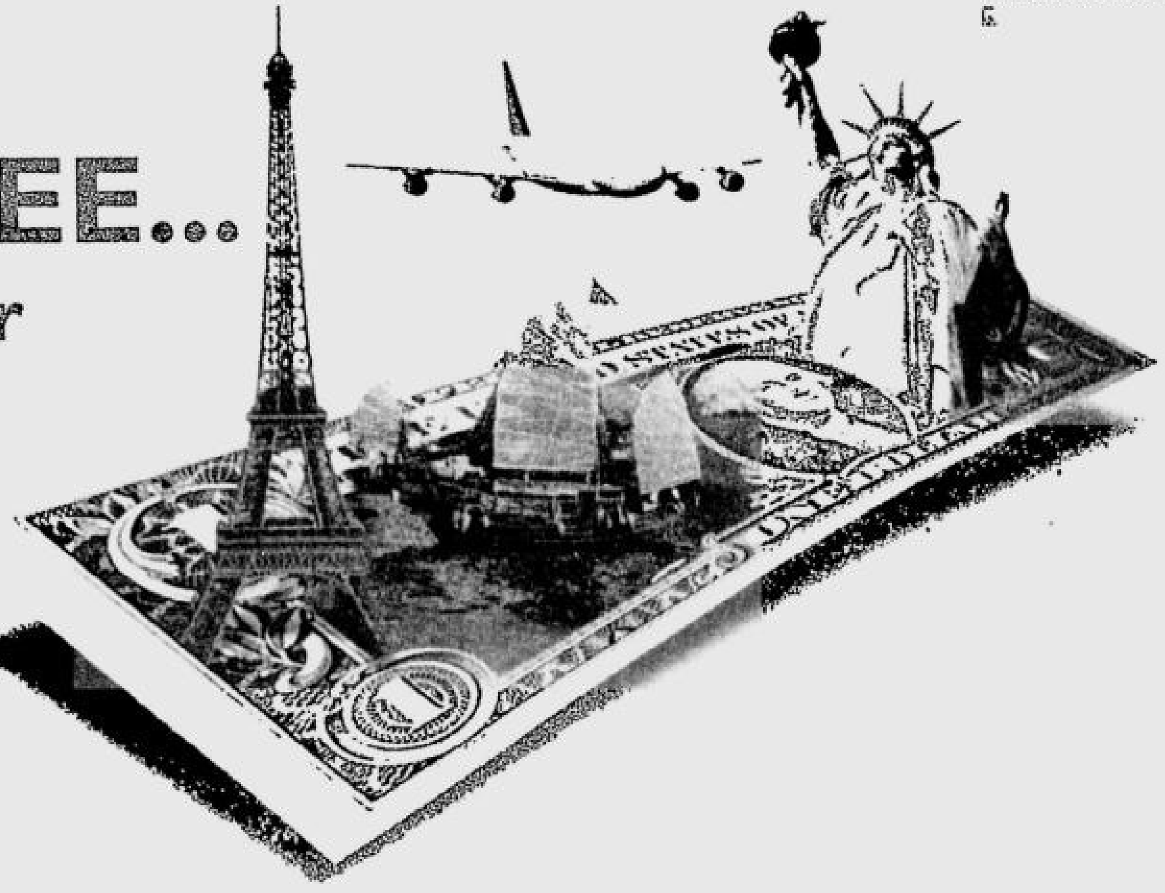

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0471, Series of 2000.

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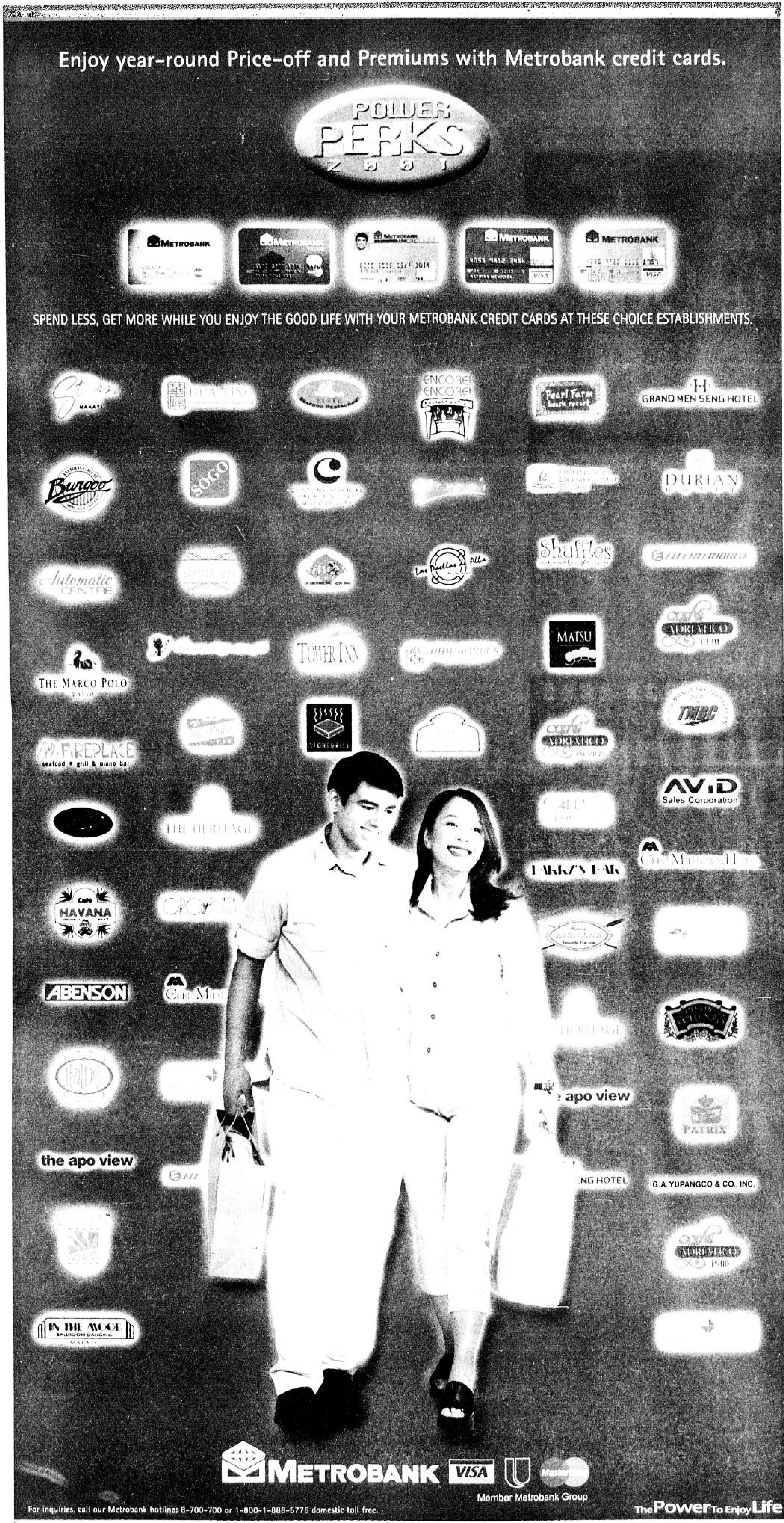

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- 5% discount on total bill

BISTRO REMEDIOS
1911 M. Adriatico St., Remedios Circle, Malate
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6754 Ayala Ave., Allied Bank Center, 2/F Car Park Bldg., Makati City
- 10% discount on total bill and free dessert or free noodles for every set menu

FIREPLACE SEAFOODS GRILL
Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City
- Free iced tea

FIRST VIENNA KAFFEE HAUS
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IN THE MOOD BALLROOM DANCING MALATE
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- 5% discount on total bill

ITALDELI
1009 Metropolitan Ave., Makati City
- 5% discount on total bill

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Greenbelt Mall, Makati City
- Free small order of Szechuan Shrimp for a minimum food purchase of P1,500 (a la carte only)

LAS PAELLAS DE ALBA
55 Timog Ave., Quezon City
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LARRY'S BAR
3/F 1900 M. Adriatico St., Remedios Circle, Malate
- 5% discount on total bill

LOLO DAD'S CAFÉ
899 President Quirino Ave., Malate, Manila
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Roxas Blvd., cor. EDSA
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CEBU MIDTOWN HOTEL
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CEBU PLAZA HOTEL
Manila Sales and Reservations office: 14/F Centerpoint Condominium, Julia Vargas cor. Garnet Sts., Pasig City
- 50% discount on all room categories based on published room rates

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Timog Ave. cor. Tomas Morato, Quezon City
- 35% discount on published room rates with breakfast

CENTURY PARK HOTEL
Vito Cruz cor. Adriatico Sts., Malate
- 50% discount on published room rates

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Roxas Blvd., cor. EDSA
- 50% discount on published room rates

MANGO PARK HOTEL
Gen. Maxilom Ave., Cebu City
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PARK PLACE HOTEL
Cebu City
- 20% discount on published room rates

PEARL FARM
Davao City
- 60% discount on published room rates

THE MARCO POLO DAVAO
C. M. Recto cor. M. Roxas Sts., Davao
- 50% discount on published guest room rates (prior reservation required)
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TOWER INN HOTEL
1002 Arnaiz Ave., Makati City
- 20% discount on published room rates

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- 10% discount on non-sale items

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All branches
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ORO Y PLAZA
G/F, Narra Bldg., 2276 Pasong Tamo Ext., Makati City
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- 10% discount on non-sale items

TOYOTA CUBAO AND MANILA BAY
- 10% discount on parts and services

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0386, series of 2001.

Hair and there

BY MOZART A.T. PASTRANO

IT'S a guy thing, the way he tousles my hair like this, in full view of everyone.

His fingers are robust and reassuring, and his grip steady. He's apparently the sort of guy who thinks with his hands—spontaneous enough but sure about what he wants...to do with me.

Of course he asks me if I like what he's doing, and in the blur of the moment all I can manage to say is mmm.

Now, before my friend W. (that's you, Wicked reader) gets any silly ideas, here are the facts: It's after office hours at the newest mall in town, Rockwell's Power Plant, and I'm having a blast at Bruno's.

For the uninitiated, it's the barbershop at the basement, down the alley at Cook's Exchange. I like how it's tucked away from the main hallway, allowing its clients much-needed privacy. The location is also convenient in another way: it's right near the tunnel leading to all the residential towers at the Rockwell Center.

And so I'm having a haircut at Bruno's. I always find myself getting a haircut when I'm down and out. Well, isn't Valentine's the most depressing time of year? I don't just want a haircut. I want a head shave! Cut and cut clean, as they say.

But no, advises Ferdie, the barber assigned to me. "*Hindi bagay sa iyo ang magpakalbo dahil kakaiba ang hugis ng ulo mo,*" is his expert opinion. I don't know whether to be amused, flattered or flabbergasted. But I keep my peace and let his fingers and scissors be.

There's something about a haircut that makes me quiver all over. Perhaps it's the sheer physicality of it—all that finger play, the cold tickle of steel on the nape, the rhythmic warmth of the electric razor.

It can also be the excitement of the unknown: How will I look afterwards? (*Papatayin ko ba ang barbero mamaya?*)

But I think the main thing here is that of surrender: to simply close your eyes and leave your fate in your barber's hands, allowing him to rampage through the very private geography of your hair and there.

So here I am, having a haircut at Bruno's. It's a no-frills barbershop with a cool industrial look to it: a playful mix of glass and metal, leather details and Italian granite flooring. Cozy without being frightfully luxurious.

HAIR AND THERE. A decent haircut—like the one given by Bruno's Ferdie—is hard to find.

MACHO VANITIES. A barbershop with all the works

But I'm not here because of the architecture. I'm here because it offers, at reasonable prices, traditional barber services, even those no longer offered in more trendy salons. I'm talking of ear cleaning, old-fashioned shave on manually sharpened long blades, gray hair pulling and even scalp massage—aside from the usual shampoo, blow-dry, hot oil treatment and manicure/pedicure. (There are 27 regular services listed.)

There are also new services, and I decide to try some.

Now that my haircut is done, I ask Ferdie to give me a Mauro scalp treatment. He plunks down a blob of greenish goo on my hair and begins to massage it on me. All of a sudden, my scalp tingles with an icy mint freshness. I think of Milan Kundera's phrase, the unbearable lightness of being! Super *talaga*!

My hair is then wrapped in a thin towelette and is put inside the hair dryer globe.

While my scalp sweats it out in there for a few soothing minutes, a lady attendant gives me foot therapy. My feet are dipped in a curious-looking container filled with warm water. Then she gives my legs and feet—especially the soles—a sandy scrub. (I think it's just the texture of the gloves she's using.) She does other things, too, but by then I've dozed off.

The scalp treatment ends with a shampoo, but my Bruno's treat is just picking up. Coming up next is good old body massage.

Whoever says you go to the barbers for a haircut hasn't heard of Bruno's. Here you get all the works.

And at affordable prices, too! The haircut, believe it or not, is only P120!

Aside from Rockwell, Bruno's is also at Alabang Town Center, Lao Center at Pasay Road, Ortigas Avenue-Greenhills, Julia Vargas-Ortigas Center, Katipunan Road-White Plains, Tomas Morato and Banawe. Call the main office at 631-9979.

E-mail the author at mozpas@yahoo.com

THREE SISTERS. Joyce, Amy and Karina run a man's world

Women running a man's world

BEHIND the success of Bruno's barbershop are three gorgeous women: Amy Manas-Pascual, who started the business and is the company president; Karina Manas-Manapat, VP for marketing; and Joyce Manas, who runs the entire show these days as VP for operations. INQUIRER LIFESTYLE had lunch with them last weekend, and here's how our chat went:

Amy: When I was still living in Alabang, I had difficulty looking for a place where my son could have a decent haircut. So I decided to open my own barbershop.

Like, you know how to cut hair.

Amy: No *naman*. I hired people and checked out their skills and attitudes. I made sure we had the traditional barber services like haircut, facial, shave and ear cleaning.

Why did you call it Bruno's?

Amy: I was looking for a macho name. Well, Bruno's is very masculine. And it means "brown man." And it's Italian. *Di ba* the first barbers originated from Sicily?

Karina: A business name should also be catchy, and Bruno's is catchy.

Joyce: Many think there's a Bruno in our family, but there's none, although we have two brothers.

From your original shop in Alabang, how did this become a family business?

Amy: I opened the Alabang branch in 1990. Two years later, Karina opened the Katipunan branch near St. Ignatius.

Karina: We were operating the business like a mom and pop's store until Joyce joined us two years ago.

Amy: Yeah, we were the entrepreneurs and Joyce is the management girl.

Joyce: After getting my HRM degree at UP, I worked in the tourism industry, mainly at Edsa Shangri-La, where I was doing banquet sales. Bruno's was expanding, and my sisters wanted me to help organize things. They were doing well, otherwise they wouldn't be expanding; all I did was to standardize operations.

Karina: She did the fine-tuning.

What kind of clients do you get?

Amy: They're the reasonably affluent men.

Karina: Mainly A-B.

Joyce: We actually get all sorts. Let's say Bruno's attracts guys who have developed a desire to pamper themselves.

Amy: *Kasi* these days men are no longer embarrassed to request for some pampering. They have acquired a taste for facials, masks, rubdowns.

Karina: We adapt to the times.

Joyce: We also get walk-ins who just want to shake off their stress. Our barbershop becomes a stress management clinic!

What about you, what kind of guys attract you?

Karina: I like the conservative types.

Amy: She's boring *kasi*.

Karina: But my husband is not. (Laughter.)

Joyce: I prefer guys with a strong personality. Or maybe that should be character. One who's exactly my opposite.

Amy: I want a guy who's superior to me in all aspects—intellectually, financially, etc.

Karina: She has a strong personality *kasi*.

Amy: I want someone who can control me, but not totally. (Laughter.)

Mozart A.T. Pastrano

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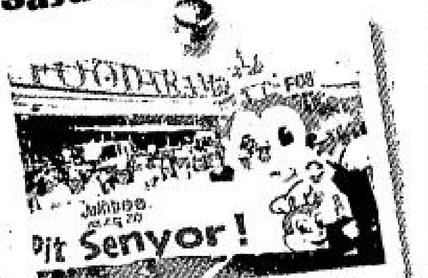
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. #0318, Series of 2001

Jollibee Journal

Busog sa Saya sa Sinulog!



JFC - RBU managers and staff join the Sinulog festivities!

Last January 21, 2001, Jollibee celebrated Cebu's grand Sinulog Festival, in honor of the Sto. Niño. Parade-goers were thrilled by the entrance of Jollibee's vivid red float, decorated with flowers, butterflies, and of course, its lovable mascots.

Hetty & Jollibee - two of the favorite mascots - waved from atop the float, delighting onlookers. The Cabadbaran Tribe of Agusan del Norte wowed spectators with a show-stealing performance of spirited ethnic dancing.

Jollibee area managers and marketing officers from the Visayas-Mindanao region were present to join the revelry, rejoicing for the holy presence of the Sto. Niño.

All in all, it was yet another glorious celebration in one of Cebu's grandest and most festive traditions. Pit Señor!

Park Off the Street & Get a Jollibee Treat!

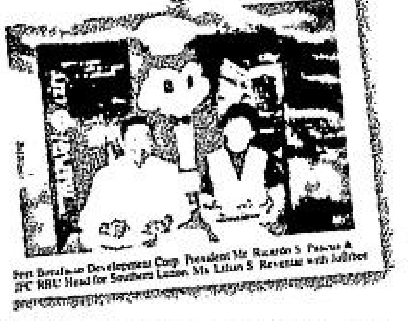
The new Jollibee - Ayala Center Carpark Card.

Jollibee officially launched its new Carpark Card, a promotional co-branding effort in cooperation with the Ayala Center in Makati City. This card entitles Ayala Center establishment patrons to a complimentary order of regular french fries at Jollibee, provided they make use of the carpark facility.

Ayala Center patrons who use the carpark will receive special Jollibee cards. These cards may be presented at the Jollibee store specified on the card, to claim a free order of regular-sized french fries upon the order of any value meal.

The card is available at the Glorietta 4 Basement Parking, the Park Square 1 Carpark, the Greenbelt Carpark, and the Landmark's Open Parking until December 31,2001.

Jollibee Global City — Soon!



Fort Bonifacio Development Corp. President Mr. Ricardo S. Pascua & JFC RBU Head for Southern Luzon, Ms. Lilian S. Revestar with Jollibee

Very soon, in a rising city, people will have a place to stop and savor down-home *langhap-sarap* goodness.

Talk about something local going global!

Because Jollibee is all about reaching out and bringing Filipinos together, Jollibee Foods Corporation recently signed a contract with the Fort Bonifacio Development Corporation. It's now official -- a brand new Jollibee branch will soon rise at the Global City in Taguig!

The new store will be conveniently situated at the heart of the fast-rising, ultra-modern Global City, at the GAS Plaza at 32nd Street corner Rizal Drive. This exciting new store promises to be a great everyday attraction amidst the hustle and bustle of what will be a major hub of urban activity.

Jollibee Vigan City -- soon to be a favorite in Ilocos Sur!

Ilang Tulog na Lang... Meron Nang Jollibee Vigan!

Just a few days to go before the opening of Jollibee Vigan City! In line with our continuing commitment to bring Jollibee closer to the hearts of the Filipino, Jollibee will be opening its very first store in the Ilocos Sur region.

The opening of this new store is eagerly anticipated not only by the local residents, but by Jollibee employees and staff. Jollibee Vigan City's Grand Opening Day promises to be a memorable event, with plenty of exciting activities and lots of great promotional give-aways. Of course, these are just a few small reasons why the people in Vigan City will surely be frequenting the newest addition to Jollibee's growing network of stores. Recently, Jollibee Vigan City's management paid courtesy visits to the site with Hon. Mayor Eva Marie S. Medina & Archbishop Edmund Abaya.

For feedback, comments, suggestions, please write to:
Jollibee Journal
c/o the Marketing Division, Jollibee Center
San Miguel Ave., Pasig City, Philippines
journal@jollibee.com.ph

Jollibee.

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Cebu's best-kept secret

(Story on page E2)

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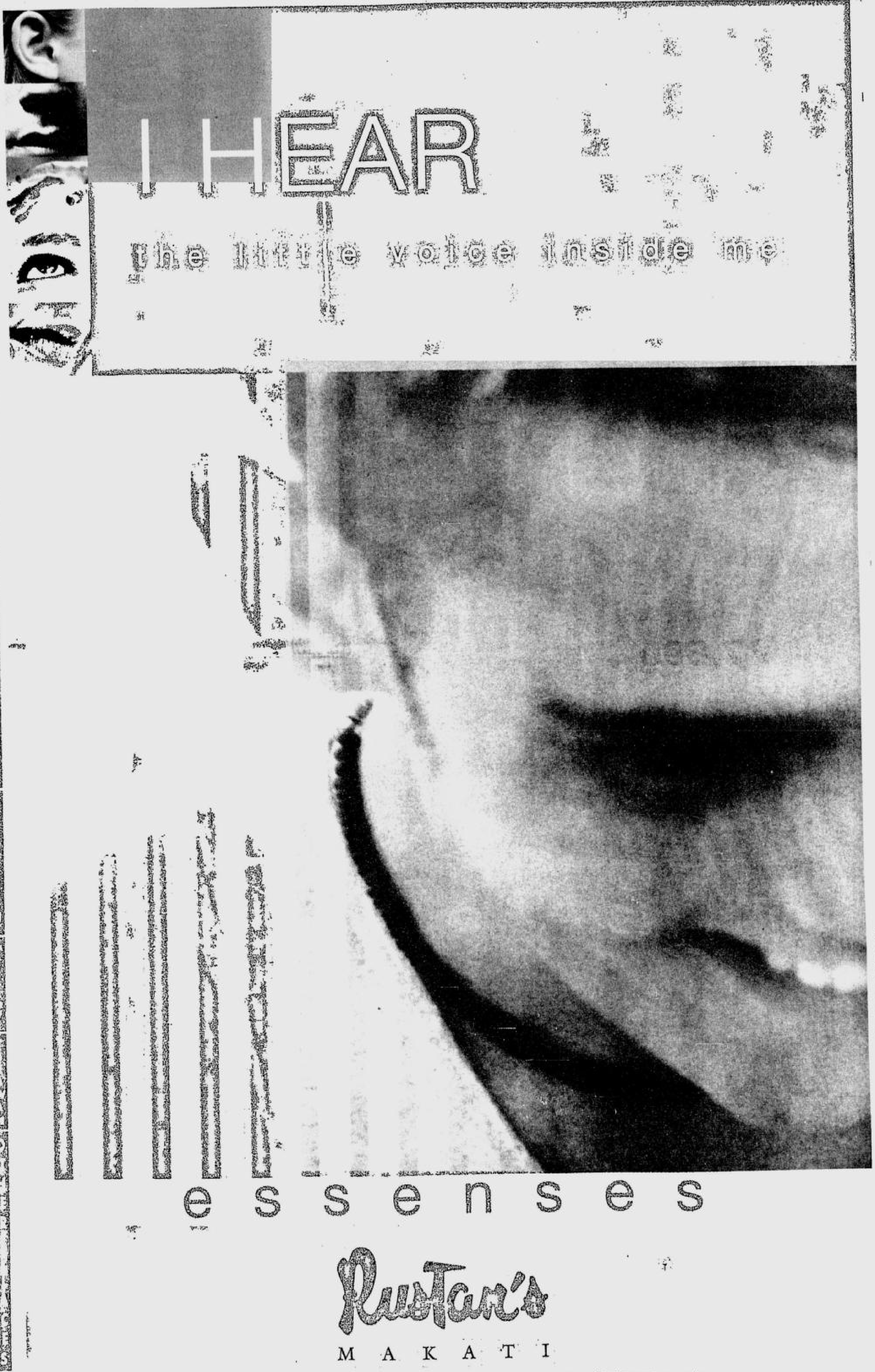
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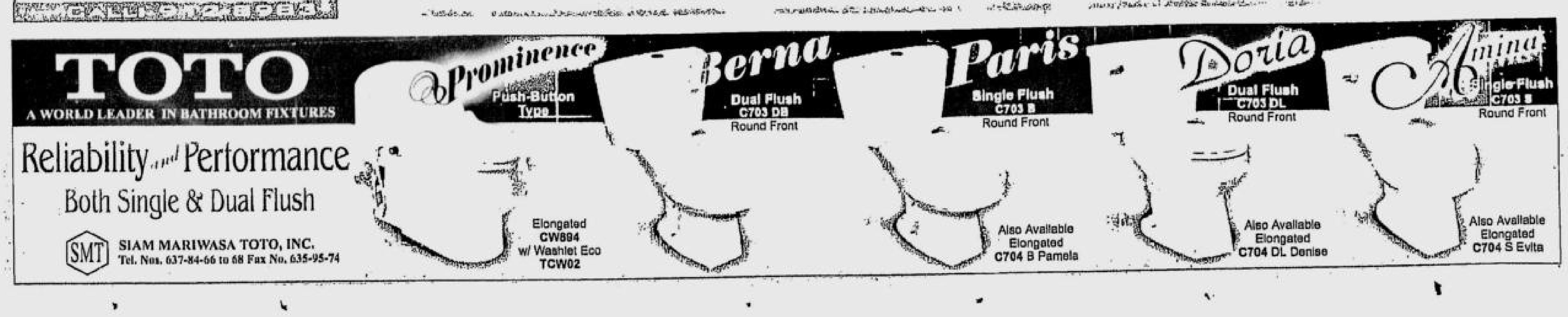
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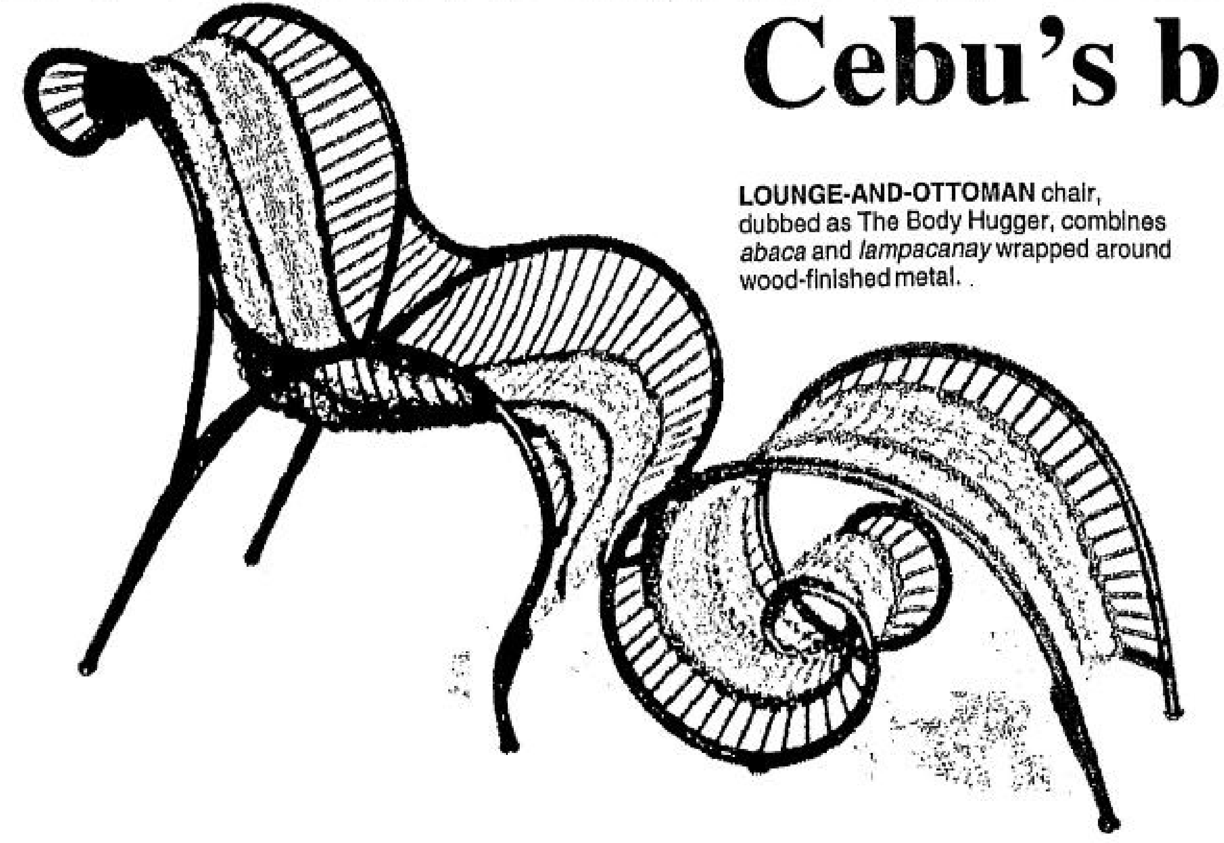
Cebu's best-kept secret



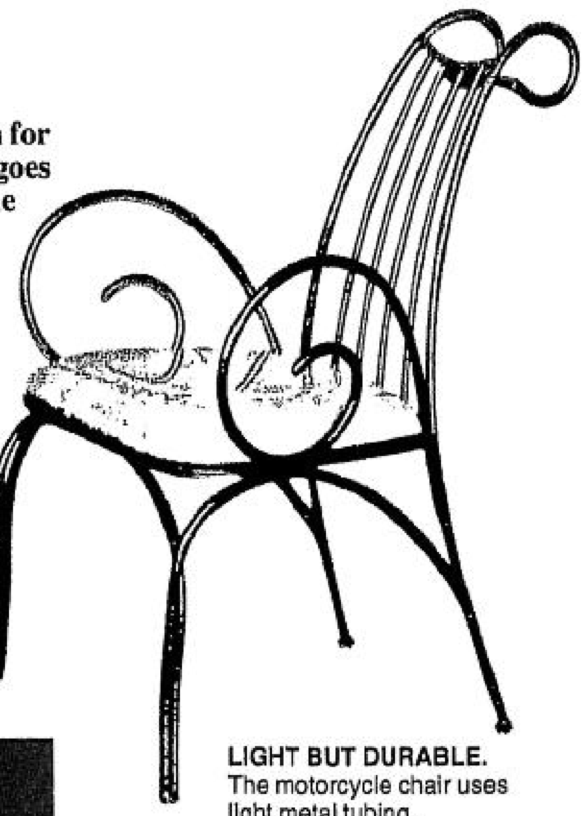
LOUNGE-AND-OTTOMAN chair, dubbed as The Body Hugger, combines *abaca* and *lampacanay* wrapped around wood-finished metal. .

BY ALEX Y. VERGARA
PHOTOS BY BOBOT MERU

THEY have long been known for producing the sweetest mangoes and the best guitars in the country, but to the rest of the world Cebuanos have also gained a reputation as one of the world's finest furniture makers for almost 30 years now. After talking with three leading Cebu-based manufacturers, we soon understood why.

All eyes will again be trained on them as this year's edition of the Philippine International Furniture Show opens at Manila's World Trade Center (Feb. 24-27) and later at the Cebu International Convention Center (Feb. 27-March 2).

Now on its fifth year, the furniture show dubbed "Contrast and Contradiction" gathers hundreds of the best names in the furniture scene. Over 2,000 foreign buyers, mostly from the United States, are again expected to troop to the two venues.



LIGHT BUT DURABLE. The motorcycle chair uses light metal tubing.

Robust growth

While many local industries reeled from Erap's mismanagement and rising crude oil prices, Cebu's furniture exporters continued to enjoy robust growth, some by as much as 40 percent last year.

In 1999, the country's furniture exports reached $352 million, with rattan and wood as the leading materials used. From January to September last year, furniture sales grossed $286 million, a 12-percent increase over the same period in 1999. Cebu-based manufacturers generated more than half these sales.

"Cebu first began exporting rattan and wrought iron pieces in the early '70s," says Charles Streegan, concurrent president of Pacific Traders and the Cebu Furniture Industries Foundation. "One of the factors that led to our success is our conscious effort to grow with the demands of our customers."

Indeed, Cebu has come a long way from a mere exporter of rattan poles in the late '60s to a regional trendsetter, imitated but often unmatched by notorious copycats from China, Vietnam and Indonesia.

Like pearl-shake stands today, furniture factories soon sprouted in Cebu back then. Such me-too mentality spurred creativity and competition, leaving room for only the best to survive. And unlike today's fancy beverages, the net incomes of Cebu's furniture makers aren't likely to taper off anytime soon.

"The island of Cebu is a melting pot with plenty of people but very little natural resources," explains Gus Palao, marketing director of Design Ventures. "This became a good environment for trade and commerce. Businessmen took the lead of their colleagues after seeing them succeed in the furniture business."

Strength

By the late '80s, most furniture makers have shifted to wood and metal pieces paired with leather and other indigenous materials such as *abaca*, wicker, sea grass, fossilized tiles and bamboo. Since it's now in short supply, rattan is combined or used sparingly as accents. The Filipinos' legendary creativity is again evident in fresh designs that generally appeal to rich foreigners.

"One of our strengths is still in design," says Lita Quisumbing, JLQ and Silya Int'l.'s vice president for marketing. "Our prices may be higher than those of other countries, but we definitely give our customers value for money."

But clever designs don't always translate to sales, especially if a company is unable to come up with quality pieces on time. The name of the game is still speed since today's revolutionary ideas are bound to become tomorrow's chief knockoffs.

"A great design is only good for the ego," says Streegan. "If you can't make it into a finished product efficiently then it [design] amounts to nothing."

The ability to keep company secrets is perhaps another, well, secret to their success. The three seemed cool to the idea of revealing their collection until the day the fair opens. It might be also a polite way of telling us to go and see the show.

Pacific Traders Group

WHAT crisis? Pacific Traders and its three sister companies hardly felt last year's sluggish economy as the group grew by a healthy 20 percent—fuelled in no small way by the robust US economy. More than 90 percent of its products have ended up in the American market.

"Contemporary pieces made of wood and com-

CEBU'S/ p.E3

SILYA Int'l's VP for marketing Lita Quisumbing

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EASY LIVING. Wicker and *abaca* alternate to form lounge and coffee table framed by metal. Base and tabletop are made of mahogany.

PACIFIC TRADERS

Cebu's best-kept secret

(From page E2)

PACIFIC Traders president Charles Streegan

bined with various materials remain strong in the US," says Charles Streegan. "American buyers love to source [furniture] products from Asia because of the diversity the region offers. They also have access to a good number of reliable but low-cost manufacturers."

For years, furniture firms like Pacific Traders made minor innovations as they followed the dictates of foreign buyers. Lately, though, designing furniture has become a collaborative effort as buyers began to seek fresh ideas from suppliers. The move resulted in better products with a broader market appeal.

Direction

"Many of them still give directions to designers," says Streegan. "But at the same time they have started to ask us to come up with something different."

Founded by family patriarch Hugo Streegan in 1973, Pacific Traders was chiefly involved in the export of rattan poles. It has now shifted to furniture pieces made of wood combined with indigenous materials.

Through the years, Pacific spun off to include such companies as Worldmark Furniture Industries Inc. for furniture pieces made of wrought iron and natural materials. Magellan Veneer Corp. produces high-grade veneer for furniture making and wall paneling. Borders, launched in 1997, is the group's showroom and retail outlet in Metro Manila. These furniture pieces, take note, aren't production overruns, but the best the group has to offer.

"Some people find our prices at Borders a little too expensive, but we're generally happy with the public's response," says Streegan.

The four companies, which employ close to 1,200 people, have their respective factories in Cebu. Unlike most furniture companies, the group imports a bulk of its wood consisting primarily of American hardwood and New Zealand pine. The group has lessened its demand for locally grown mahogany.

"Since we don't use as much local lumber as we used to, there's not so much pressure on the industry." Streegan admits.

Competition

But regional competition has always been a cause for concern. Countries such as China, Indonesia and Vietnam come up with cheaper versions of hot designs that can dampen sales of companies such as Pacific Traders.

"People copy in all industries," says Streegan. "We just have to be faster and more efficient in saturating the market with our products to stay ahead of the competition."

Aside from a well-trained and disciplined staff, Streegan and his team are constantly finding ways to improve scheduling, inventory management and the layout of each factory. The group regularly hires consultants and invests in the latest equipment. A computer-controlled machine, for instance, is designed to produce a prototype in half the usual time.

"This is still a labor-intensive industry," Streegan admits. "Our goal has always been to produce more with the same number of people. Everything must be done with a sense of urgency without letting quality suffer." With so much work to do, they don't have time to chat and argue.

Design Ventures Inc.

"NOTHING is perfect. What really matters is how we use these imperfections to create beauty."

So says Debbie Palao, managing director and in-house designer of Design Ventures, when asked to describe the philosophy behind her designs. Debbie established Design Ventures with husband Gus Palao, the company's marketing director, more than 10 years ago.

Before that Gus worked as a buying agent for furniture pieces bound for Australia, while Debbie, a CPA, managed a Japanese restaurant. She has been into designing clothes and accessories long before they made their fortune in furniture.

"The thought of selling better furniture than the ones I was selling then inspired us to establish our own company," recalls Gus. "We were then renting a factory without the slightest idea of how to sustain it. Fortunately, we got our first batch of buyers soon enough."

Indigenous materials

From five people, including themselves, Design Ventures now employs more than 100 employees. Many of its products have found their way to North America, Europe and the Middle East. From individual pieces, Debbie and Gus now sell a particular look.

"My [furniture] designs have evolved since then," says Debbie, also the president of the Cebu-based Designers Guild of the Philippines. "The pieces no longer stood out individually, but now blend with others to create a certain lifestyle."

Apart from maturity, not age, she insists, Debbie

CEBU'S/ p.E4

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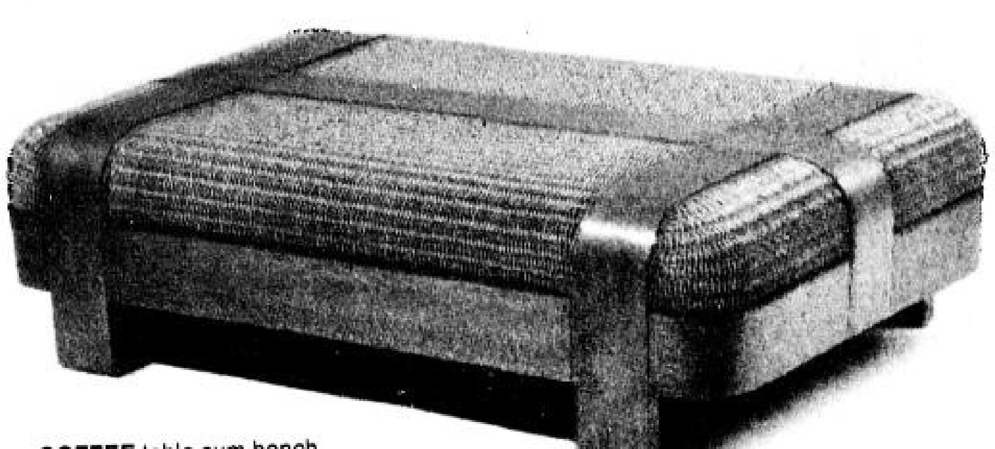
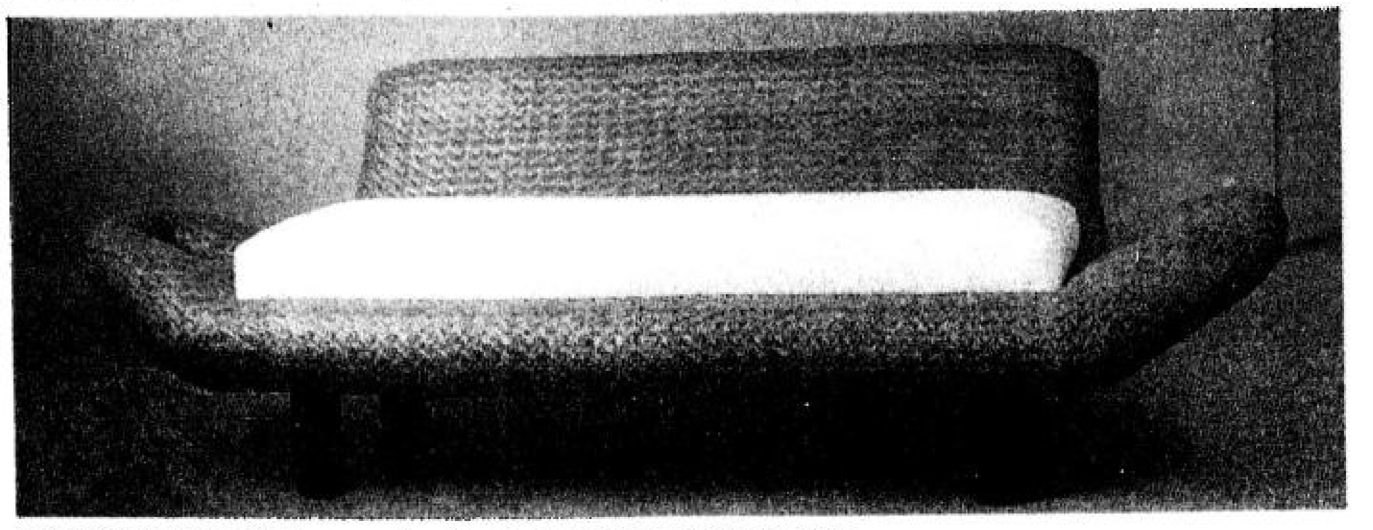


COFFEE table cum bench
made of wicker and Philippine mahogany

PACIFIC TRADERS



AFTERNOON DELIGHT. Lazy couch with reclining backrest all done in rattan

Cebu's best-kept secret

(From page E3)

credits such a gradual shift to her familiarity with indigenous materials. It pays to know their strengths and weaknesses by heart to come up with, say, the ideal chair.

Experience has thought her new ways of combining and putting these materials to good use despite shifting trends. Speaking of trends, the spirit of '80s excess may be back, but today's furniture market still goes for clean, modern lines bordering on the sculptural. Debbie has kept this in mind without losing her imprint.

"I try to manipulate materials in a way they haven't been used before," Debbie explains.

Prototype country

Consumers, she observes, are now more concerned with durability and function. As the same time, however, they have become more adventurous in mixing and matching furniture pieces like never before. As long as the furniture are tastefully put together, she adds, makers need not worry about breaking rules.

Debbie merely shrugged her shoulders when asked about copycats. As a "prototype" country, the Philippines has always been a magnet for shady regional buyers who buy furniture pieces by the container vans only to churn out cheap reproductions by the thousands later on.

"We'll just have to make sure it's harder for them to copy by producing better pieces with certain twists," she says. "Since I'm also a CPA, my next love is systems. I've designed a computer-based system to track down the progress of each piece from one section to the next."

There's always room for improvement, what with several styles rolling down their respective assembly lines at the same time. The need for speed and efficiency has become of paramount importance in the face of competition from other countries that employ cheap labor.

As president of the Designers Guild, she also hopes to further instill cooperation among members through constant and open communication. Only then, says Debbie, can they address problems that directly affect their companies and professions

> The Queen City of the South is also the world's queen of native-based furniture

JLQ and Silya Int'l Inc.

WHILE most of the competitors are known for their furniture pieces made of wood, sister companies JLQ and Silya Int'l. have purposely chosen a different route for a good reason. The two are noted for their metal-based creations combined with wood, leather, *abaca* and various indigenous materials.

Since JLQ spun off 10 years ago from Norkis, one of the country's leading motorcycle manufacturers, it has enjoyed an edge over others for its use of metal. JLQ's pieces are more ornate compared to the ones produced by Silya, which was established several years later to cater primarily to hotels, restaurants and resorts. Apart from their simplicity, chairs meant for big venues usually have no brackets to make it easier to stack them in one corner.

Norkis, which is owned by Lita Quisumbing's father-in-law, had a furniture division that she and husband John used to manage. The couple later bought the division when the old man decided to sell it.

"We also do wood pieces but not as extensively as others," says Quisumbing. "My husband and I decided early on to concentrate on what we're good at, which is metal."

Norkis, after all, is known for its superior metal work. In fact, a number of JLQ and Silya's competitors also go to Norkis for their rust proofing and chroming needs. Of course, the two are several steps ahead of the others since they've been the first to avail of Norkis' latest technology.

"Cebu-based furniture makers are unique in the sense that we try to help each other," she shares. "That's probably one thing people in Manila can never understand."

JLQ and Silya's edge is seen in pieces that have, the look and feel of wood, but are actually made of metal. The Body Hugger lounge and ottoman chair made of *abaca* and *lampacanay* wound around wood-finished metal tubes are perfect examples. There are also several mahogany, glass- and ceramic-topped tables that call attention to their curved or stylized wrought iron legs.

Others, like the so-called motorcycle chair, capitalize on the stability and sleek properties of metal. Some pieces are made of roped and braided *abaca* combined with sea grass and imported leather from Thailand. Through the use of a computerized machine called CNC, people at Silya can easily fashion an image or logo through a chair's backrest made of metal.

"Some metals are thermal-baked just like the shiny ones used in motorcycles," says Quisumbing. "We also import cold-roll metal from Korea and Japan for some of our chairs for its strength and flexibility."

Just like its chief competitors, the group caters to market demands and at the same time comes up with certain designs it deems appealing to majority of its markets. The Quisumbings rely on a number of in-house designers and a US-based Frenchman named Alain Huin for ideas. Trendy but grounded is how Lita describes her team's design philosophy.

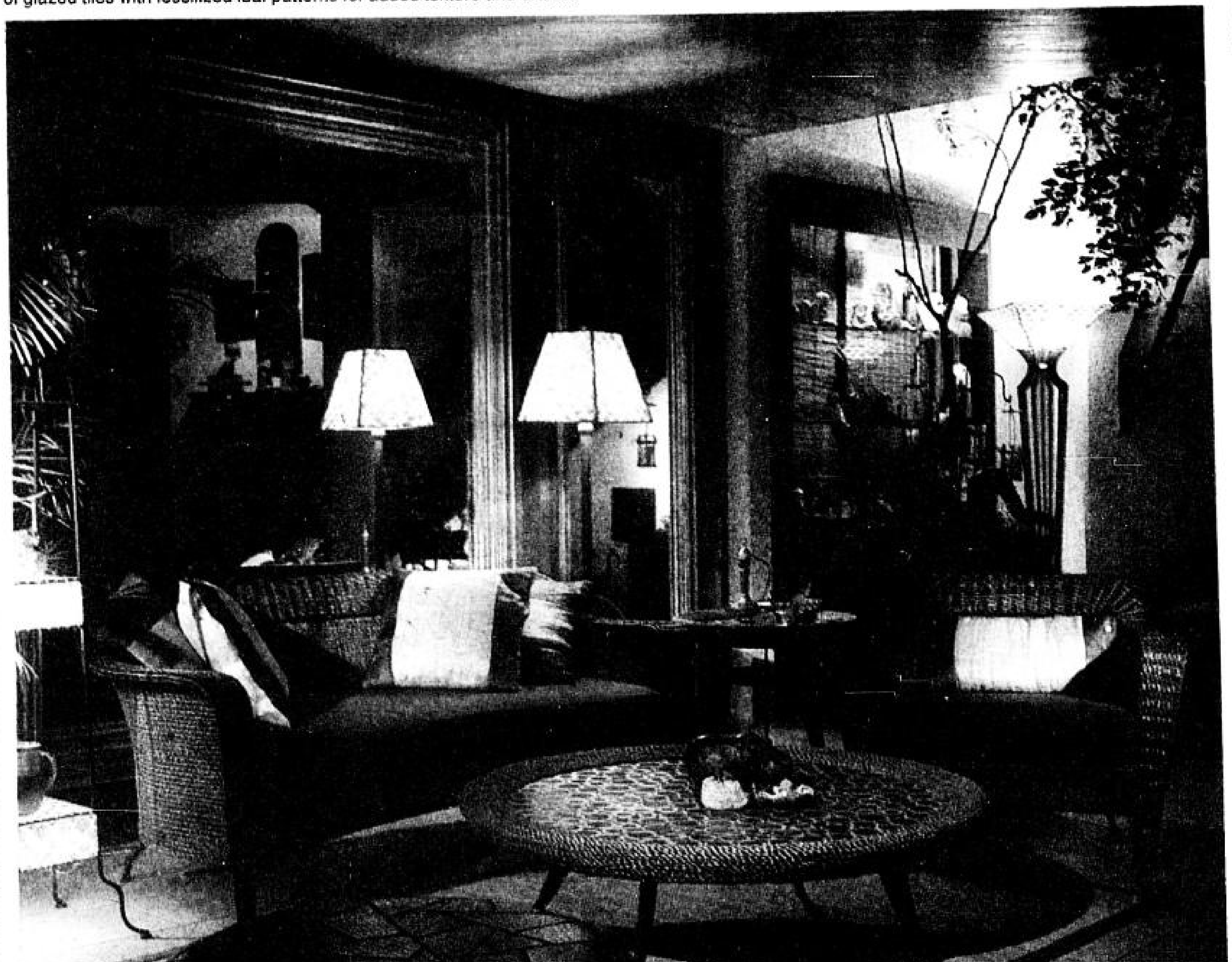
"Of course, making these wonderful designs production-ready is another matter," she adds. "We're always on our toes in search of timely and systematic ways to make these pieces cost-efficient."

And products that offer clients value for their money. That and its extensive use of metal sets the couple's products apart from those produced by wannabe competitors.

E-mail avergara@inquirer.com.ph

SUMMER SURPRISE. Bamboo table and chairs with cushions and throw pillows in white and *batik* go well with the tropical weather. Tabletop is made of glazed tiles with fossilized leaf patterns for added texture and drama.

DESIGN VENTURES



CHARMED LIFESTYLE. Lounge chair and sofa are made of roped and braided *abaca*, while coffee table of laminated bamboo rings combines roped marsh grass and *abaca*. Accent pieces consist of a lamp made of *capiz* shells and stilted leather Ottoman. Both interior shots were taken at the Palao residence.

DESIGN VENTURES

DESIGN Ventures' dynamic couple Debbie and Gus Palao

FAÇADE of Starmall reflects a higher level of sophistication with modern lines, primary colors and bold graphics.

Fast-rising Star

PHOTOS BY CHITO VECINA
PICTORIAL DIRECTION BY ALBERT AVELLANA

DEVELOPERS are realizing that a mall is not just a profit center but a venue for advertising and marketing vehicles. Bringing retail to the 21st century, the Rigueras family upgraded the former Manuela into the modern Starmall. The mall has been transformed from a traditional store complex into a modern stage for retailers' merchandise and services.

The Rigueras established Manuela Complex in Mandaluyong in 1988. Its anchor stores were the Manuela Department Store and Supermarket and fast-foods. The ground floor was littered with stalls covered with net. During the Asian crisis, ballooning bank interest rates stunted the expansion of the department store and grocery.

To sustain the business, the owners focused on the complex's biggest asset: its prime location at the junction of Shaw Boulevard and Edsa. The logical thing was to renovate it into a modern mall and lease the spaces.

In the past, the tenant mix was composed of mom-and-pop stores, single proprietary shops and flea markets. These operations didn't have five-year plans or forecast. Today, it's got an interesting mix of major chain stores, direct-selling outlets, and fashion discount stalls (formerly known as *tiangge*).

Louella Rosales, general manager and vice president for leasing and marketing, invited Rustan's supermarket to be one of the anchor stores. The third-generation Tantocos, who handle the business, did a market research. The findings revealed that it had the same client base as that of Jollibee—the C market. The locations that posted the most number of sales per square meter were in Cubao and Harrison Plaza because of the huge pedestrian traffic.

Another anchor is a smaller version of Robinsons Department Store. Since RDS opened in September, sales have been climbing. Compared with the RDS in Galleria, this 3,000 sq m store offers the best of its house brands and the more popular merchandise.

The ground floor also has Human, Bench and Delifrance. The second floor features the movies and the food court. The third floor accommodates 140 tenants that comprise the fashion lane, computer and telecommunications shops. The success of the bargain stores in Greenhills has been transferred to Starmall.

Offices and a 36-lane Puyat Center are located on the fourth floor.

A bridgeway was built to connect the mall to the MRT. If one were taking the Shaw Boulevard exit, the commuter would be lured to the shops.

Designer Robert Alejandro is responsible for Starmall's new look. He uses modern materials such as chrome railings and aluminum cladding. The bold primary colors and eye-catching graphics are meant to appeal to the youth market. The lines are angular; the color scheme is almost nautical.

Even with a budget, Alejandro was able to redesign an existing structure and punctuated it with trademark bold red columns. Like the new design and tenant mix, Starmall symbolizes the retailers' hope for the future—bright and vibrant.

Marge C. Enriquez

ATRIUM with skylight

MAIN lobby of movie theaters is made of granite flooring and ceramic tiles. Clear graphics easily lead the moviegoers to the houses.

HUMAN'S store design also serves as an advertising and marketing vehicle. New tenants such as Human epitomize the new spirit of Starmall.

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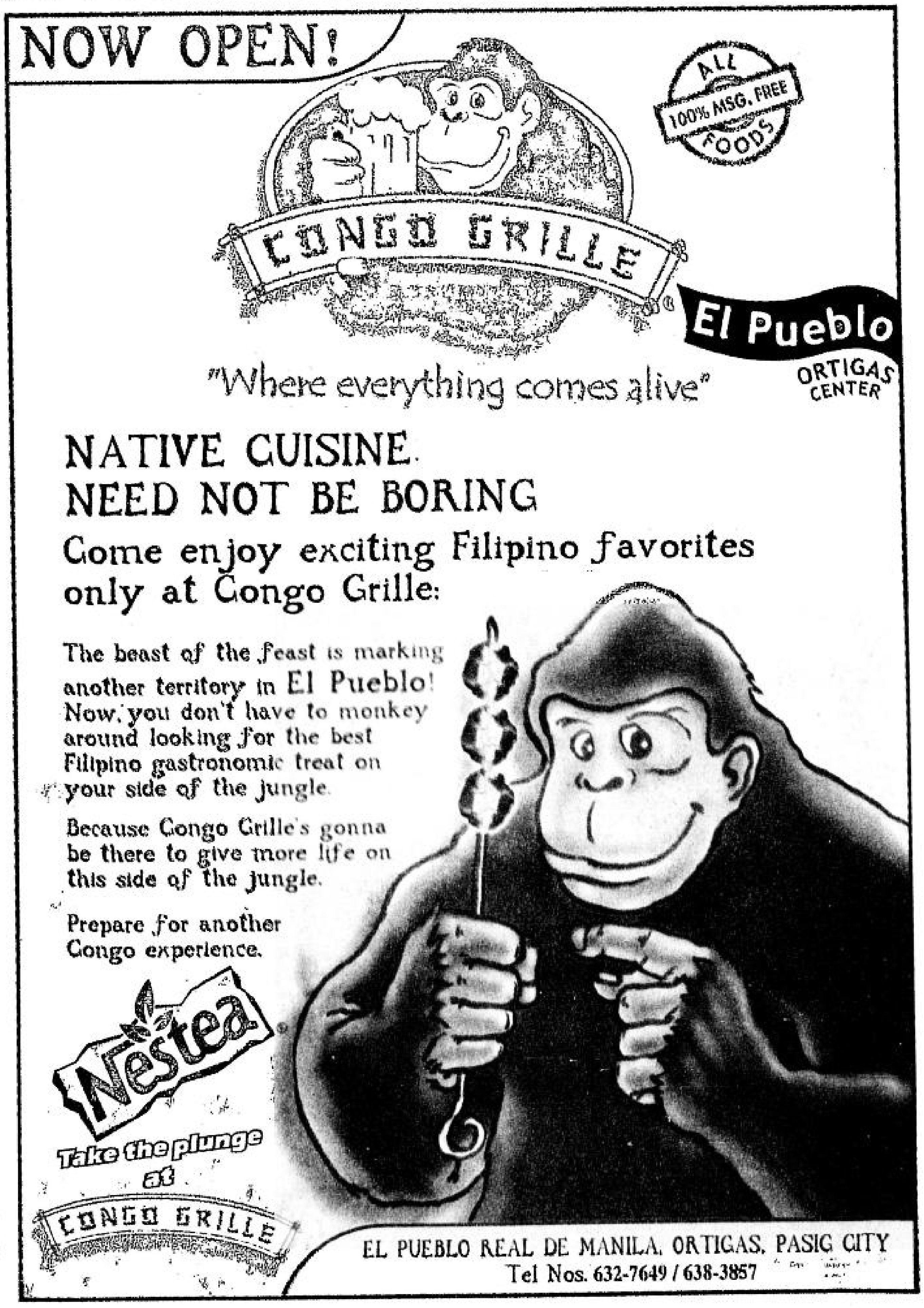

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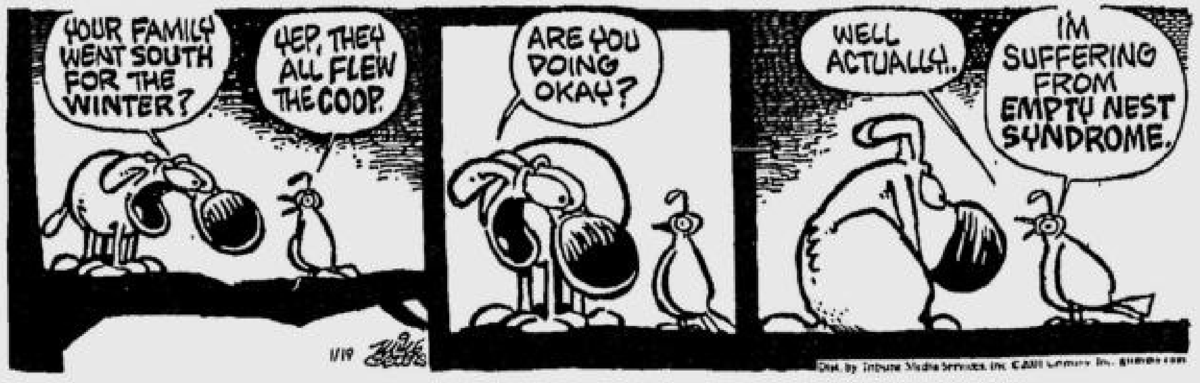
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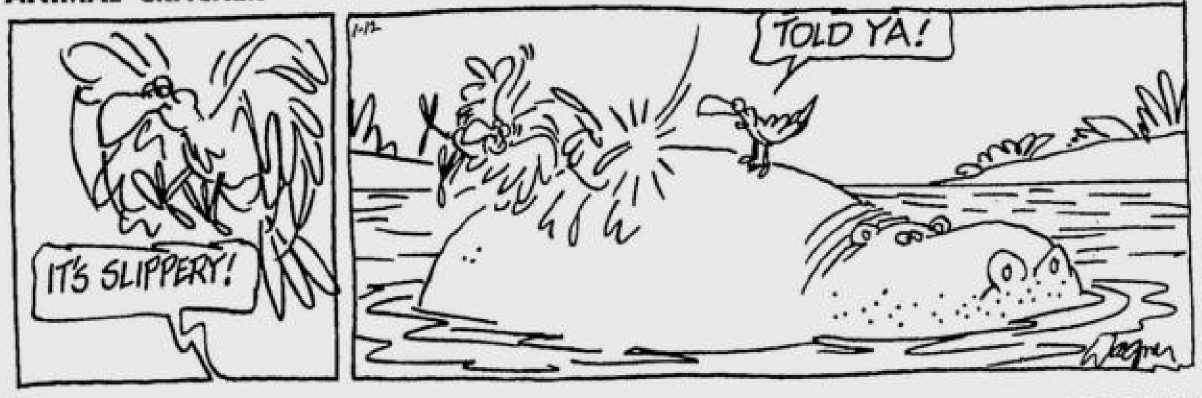
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TOLD YA!

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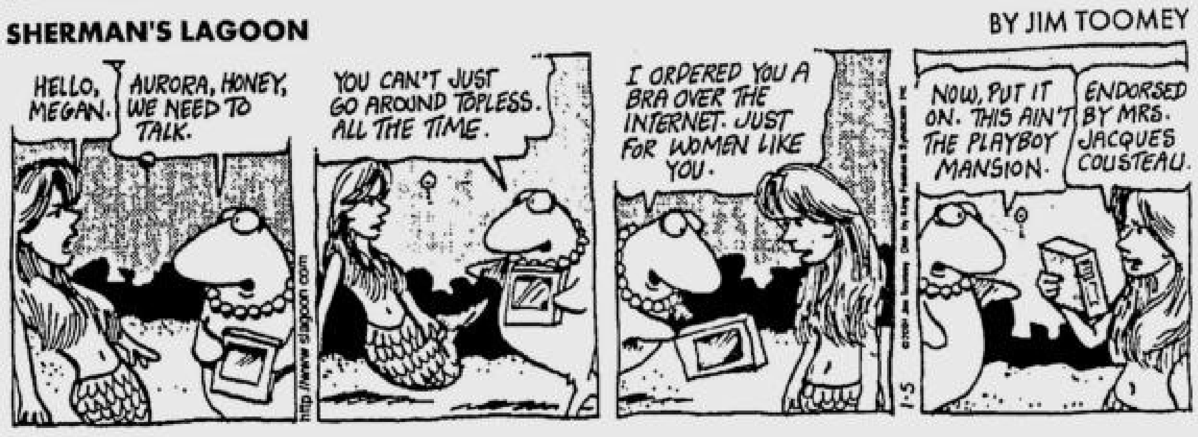
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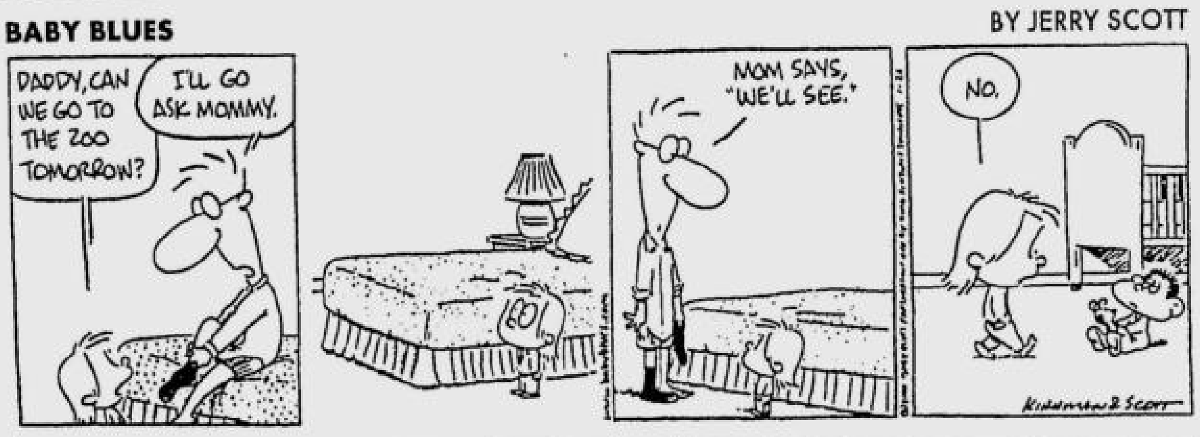
AURORA, HONEY, WE NEED TO TALK.
http://www.slagoon.com
YOU CAN'T JUST GO AROUND TOPLESS. ALL THE TIME.
I ORDERED YOU A BRA OVER THE INTERNET. JUST FOR WOMEN LIKE YOU.
1-5
NOW, PUT IT ON. THIS AIN'T THE PLAYBOY MANSION.
ENDORSED BY MRS. JACQUES COUSTEAU.

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


DADDY, CAN WE GO TO THE ZOO TOMORROW?
I'LL GO ASK MOMMY.
MOM SAYS, "WE'LL SEE."
NO.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: LeVar Burton, John McEnroe, Lisa Loring, Andy Taylor, Ice-T, William Katt

Happy Birthday: This is not the year to sit back watching others take center stage. Get your priorities straight and go after your goals. You have plenty to offer, so don't wait for others to prompt you. Your sound ideas and solutions will be well-received. You can get ahead financially if you are astute in your investments and rely on your instincts to lead you in the right direction. Your numbers: 19, 23, 26, 31, 40, 43

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Your interest in educational affairs, teaching and children is growing. Greater self-confidence is helping you deal with others in a more open and honest way, resulting in better friendships.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Don't travel unless you have no other choice. Talk to relatives who have not been well and see if there is any way you can assist them. Work on home projects.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Keep everyone you live with too busy to complain. Make sure you pay enough attention to your lover if you don't want to contend with pouting and the "poor me" syndrome.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Keep working to take your mind off past unpleasant experiences. You have to let go of the past once and for all. You can't get on with your life unless you do.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Try to include the whole family in your social events. Accept an invitation to do something different. You need to experience other cultures or ways of doing things.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Organize your day carefully. Someone you care about may be overreacting to situations concerning money. Offer to pay his or her way if it will help.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Pleasure trips or visiting friends will be most enjoyable. There will be sudden changes due to unpredictable individuals in your home.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Handle all the details regarding your personal financial situation. Don't question your boss' decisions. Just follow instructions carefully.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Don't get dragged into secret encounters. It is best to keep your feelings and intentions out in the open so that there will be no mistake or misinterpretation of your plans.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Keep your emotions clear of your professional decisions. You can make financial gains if you don't take risks. Don't let confusion lead you down the wrong path.

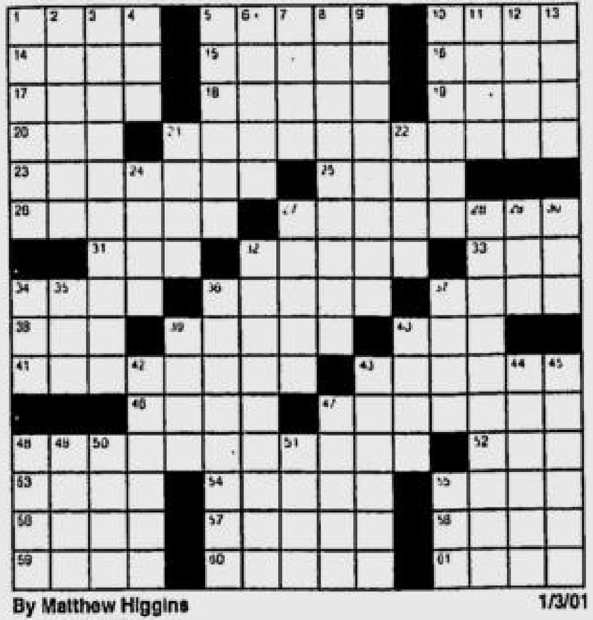
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You can meet that special person if you attend fund-raising events. Your ability to intellectually dazzle others with your innovative ideas will attract attention.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Travel will be enticing but expensive. Be sure to look into the cheapest way to explore your desired destinations. Don't exaggerate when dealing with other people's lives. You may hurt someone's feelings unintentionally.

Birthday Baby: You have a zest for life, and your friends and family will find it hard to keep up with you. You are always on the go and eager to try new things. You are competitive, caring and creative in all that you do.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com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By Matthew Higgins
Concord, NH

1/3/01

ACROSS
1 Male swans
5 Open-mouthed
10 Concern
14 Iridescent stone
15 Matt of "Good Will Hunting"
16 Module
17 Nimble
18 Head-to-head competitions
19 Emily of etiquette
20 Rocky peak
21 Super Bowl VIII MVP
23 Places of refuge
25 Mr. Coward
26 Mutineers
27 Five-sided polygon
31 OPEC product
32 Dutch artist
33 Parseghian of football
34 Sicilian volcano
36 Fasten anew
37 Support
38 Tycoon Turner
39 Letter before epsilon
40 Neither's partner?
41 Without forethought
43 Corals, e.g.
46 Plan of land
47 Subject to earthquakes
48 J.K. Rowling's wizard
52 Raw mineral
53 Medley
54 Ice-cream flavor word
55 Singer Baez
56 Football great Graham
57 Uncanny
58 Comic Johnson
59 Frost or Dove
60 Trepidation
61 Quilters' gatherings

DOWN
1 Share billing
2 Act against
3 Bobby's son the ballplayer
4 Foxy
5 "The __ Family"
6 Largest domesticated cattle
7 Part of USA
8 Part of Oceania
9 Settle comfortably
10 Dome
11 Presently
12 Hazard
13 Kett of comics
21 Action break
22 Cain's brother
24 "Star Wars" princess
27 Addlepated
28 "I've Got a Secret" host
29 Granada gold
30 Forty winks
32 Campanile
34 & so forth
35 Mad Hatter's beverage
36 Backslid
37 D.C. bigwigs
39 Tyne or Timothy
40 Black in Paris
42 Remove violently
43 Stripped the skin from
44 Buccaneer
45 Act divisions
47 Glacial grooves
48 Foul-shooter's target
49 Choir voice
50 Sacred ceremony
51 Run out of steam
55 Quick punch

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

S	H	A	W		T	S	A	R		S	O	W	E	D
L	O	R	E		A	L	M	A		P	R	O	N	E
O	P	A	L		B	E	A	N		R	E	R	U	N
B	I	B	L	I	O	P	H	I	L	E		T	R	I
			F	O	O	T			S	A	C	H	E	M
A	S	P	E	N	S		S	H	A	D	O	W		
L	O	R	D	S		W	H	A	T	S	W	H	A	T
F	L	O			P	I	E	R	S			I	R	E
A	D	J	O	U	R	N	E	D		P	A	L	M	S
		E	A	S	I	E	R		M	O	S	E	Y	S
D	I	C	T	U	M			M	O	N	O			
E	M	T		R	A	N	K	A	N	D	F	I	L	E
M	A	I	N	E		C	A	R	R		N	O	E	L
O	G	L	E	R		A	R	C	O		O	W	E	S
N	E	E	D	S		A	L	O	E		W	A	K	E

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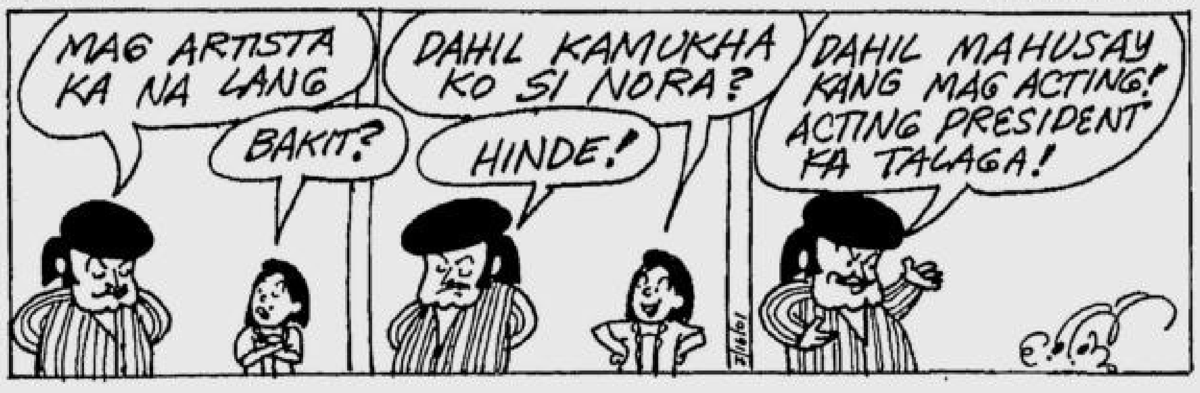
1/3/01

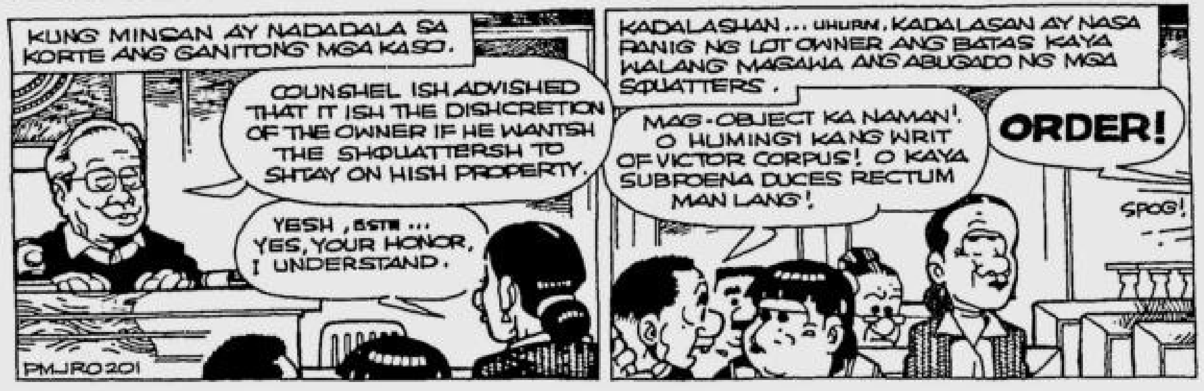
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


MAG ARTISTA KA NA LANG
BAKIT?
DAHIL KAMUKHA KO SI NORA?
HINDE!
DAHIL MAHUSAY KANG MAG ACTING! ACTING PRESIDENT KA TALAGA!

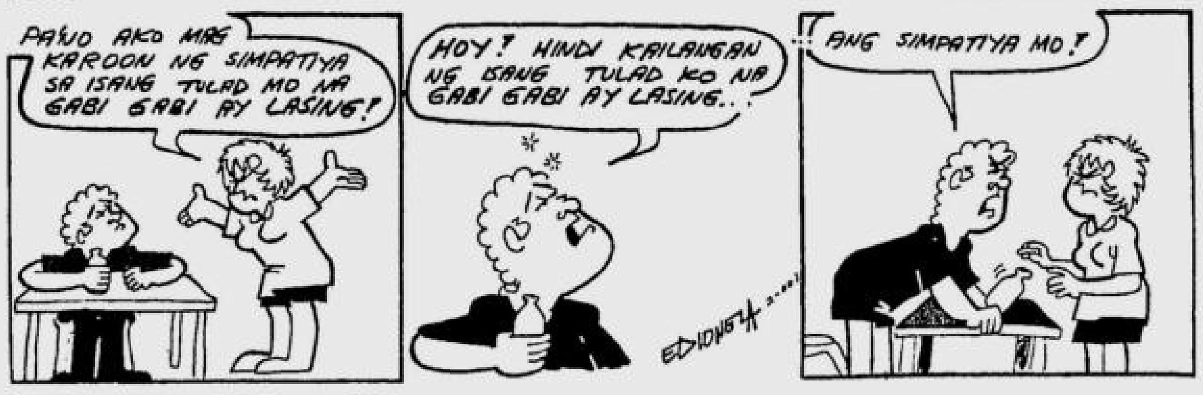
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


KUNG MINSAN AY NADADALA SA KORTE ANG GANITONG MGA KASO.
COUNSHEL ISH ADVISHED THAT IT ISH THE DISHCRETION OF THE OWNER IF HE WANTSH THE SHQUATTERSH TO SHTAY ON HISH PROPERTY.
YESH, ESTE ... YES, YOUR HONOR, I UNDERSTAND.
PMJR0201
KADALASHAN ... UHURM. KADALASAN AY NASA PANIG NG LOT OWNER ANG BATAS KAYA WALANG MAGAWA ANG ABUGADO NG MGA SQUATTERS.
MAG-OBJECT KA NAMAN! O HUMINGI KANG WRIT OF VICTOR CORPUS! O KAYA SUBPOENA DUCES RECTUM MAN LANG!
ORDER!
SPOG!

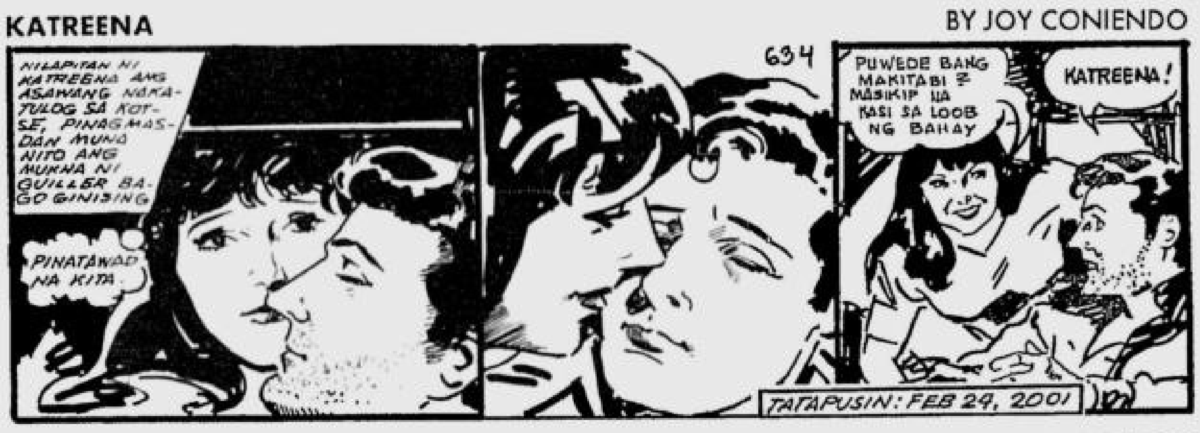
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


PA'NO AKO MAG KAROON NG SIMPATIYA SA ISANG TULAD MO NA GABI GABI AY LASING!
HOY! HINDI KAILANGAN NG ISANG TULAD KO NA GABI GABI AY LASING..
EDIONELA
ANG SIMPATIYA MO!

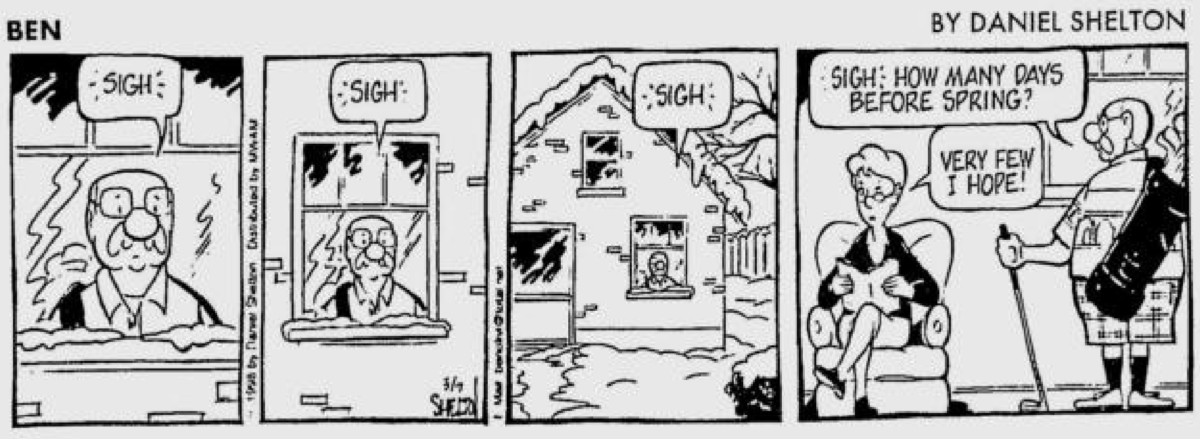
KATREENA

BY JOY CONIENDO


NILAPITAN NI KATREENA ANG ASAWANG NAKA-TULOG SA KOT-SE, PINAGMAS-DAN MUNA NITO ANG MUKHA NI GUILLER BAGO GINISING
PINATAWAD NA KITA.
634
PUWEDE BANG MAKITABI? MASIKIP NA KASI SA LOOB NG BAHAY
KATREENA!
TATAPUSIN: FEB 29, 2001

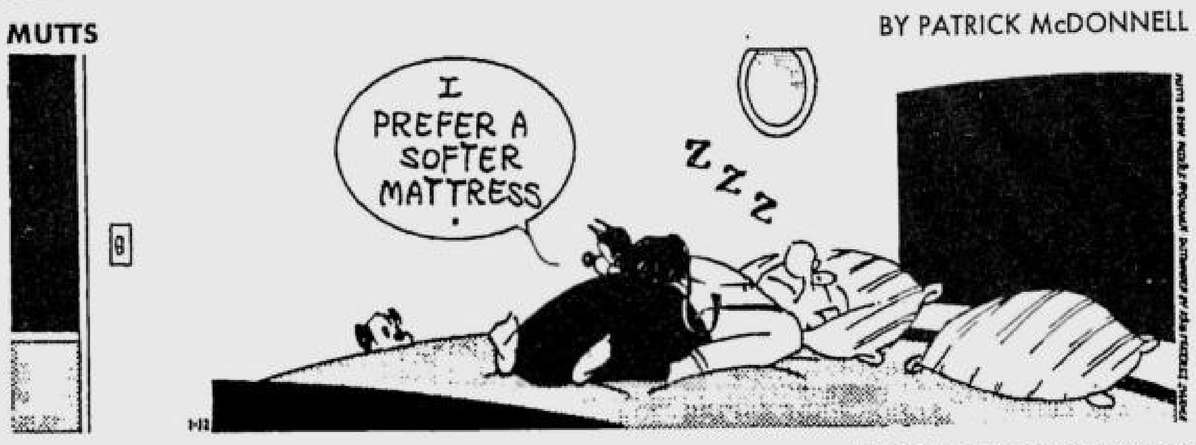
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


SIGH
SIGH
SIGH
SIGH: HOW MANY DAYS BEFORE SPRING?
VERY FEW I HOPE!
SHELTON

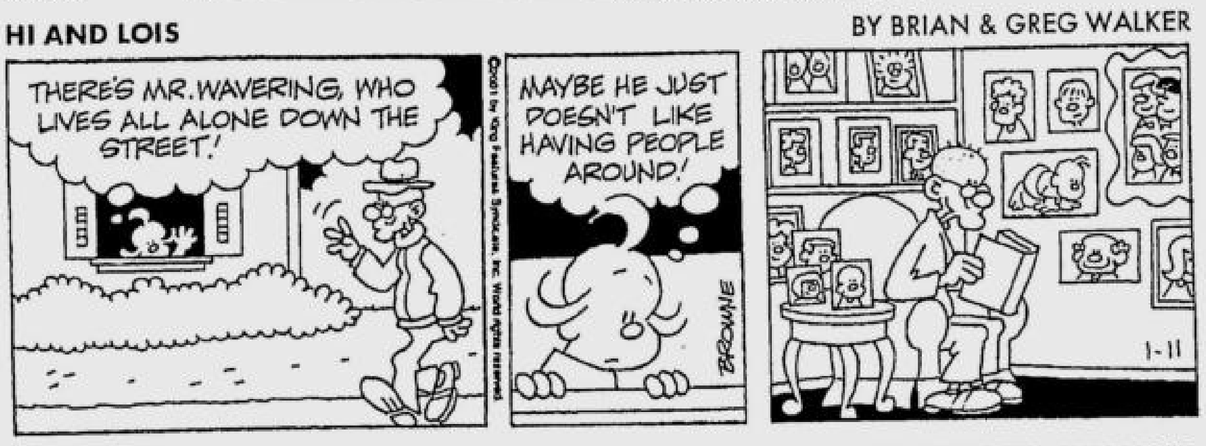
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


I PREFER A SOFTER MATTRESS.
Z Z Z
1-12

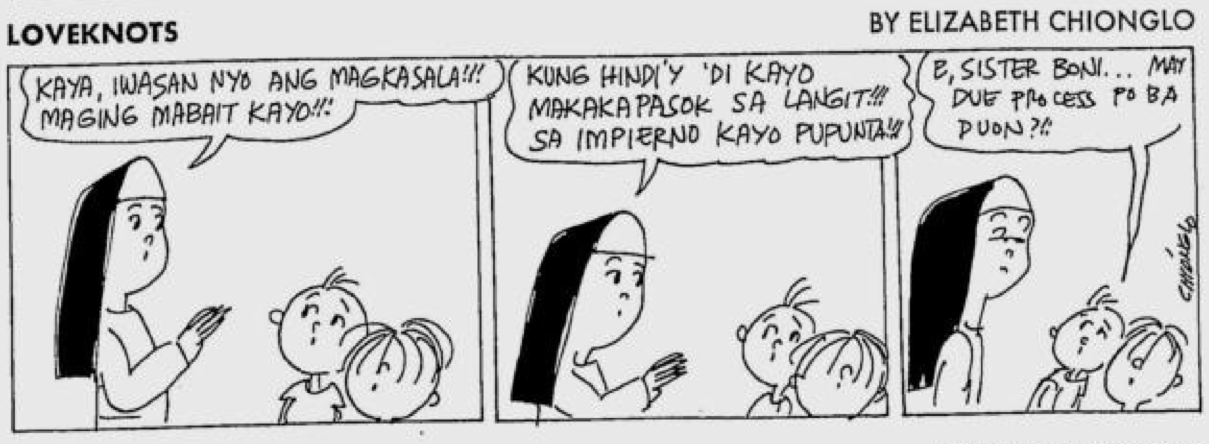
HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


THERE'S MR. WAVERING, WHO LIVES ALL ALONE DOWN THE STREET!
MAYBE HE JUST DOESN'T LIKE HAVING PEOPLE AROUND!
BROWNE
1-11

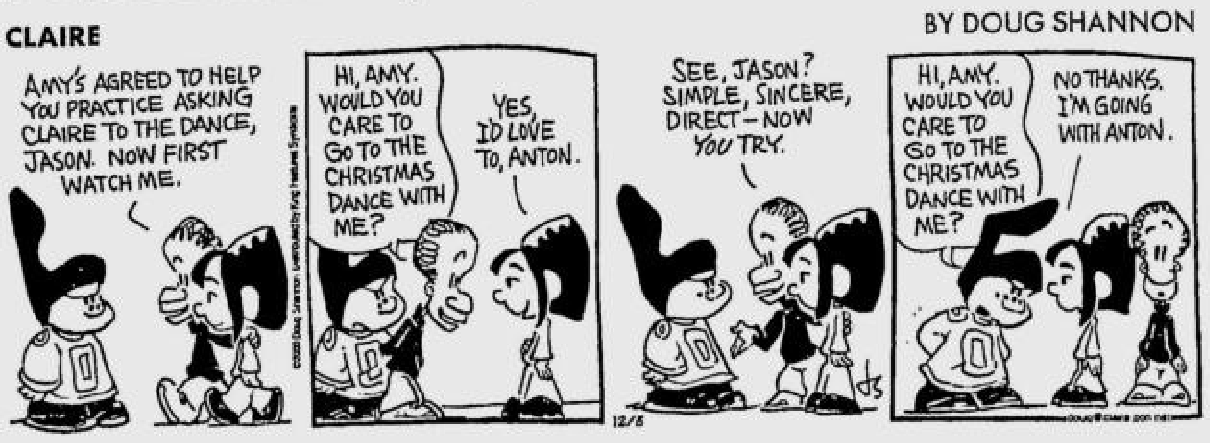
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


KAYA, IWASAN NYO ANG MAGKASALA!!! MAGING MABAIT KAYO!!!
KUNG HINDI'Y 'DI KAYO MAKAKAPASOK SA LANGIT!!! SA IMPIERNO KAYO PUPUNTA!!!
E, SISTER BONI... MAY DUE PROCESS PO BA DUON?!!
CHIONGLO

CLAIRE

BY DOUG SHANNON


AMY'S AGREED TO HELP YOU PRACTICE ASKING CLAIRE TO THE DANCE, JASON. NOW FIRST WATCH ME.
HI, AMY. WOULD YOU CARE TO GO TO THE CHRISTMAS DANCE WITH ME?
YES, I'D LOVE TO, ANTON.
SEE, JASON? SIMPLE, SINCERE, DIRECT — NOW YOU TRY.
HI, AMY. WOULD YOU CARE TO GO TO THE CHRISTMAS DANCE WITH ME?
NO THANKS. I'M GOING WITH ANTON.
12/8

What lies beneath

BY CAMILLE T. CRUZ
PHOTOS BY CHITO VECINA
PICTORIAL DIRECTION BY ALBERT AVELLANA

IT was a historic day. Last year, I found the perfect bra: Body by Victoria's Secret. The fit was comfortable, conforming to the body, supportive, seam-free and modern.

Finding the right underwear can be mentally draining. Underwear is the next big thing to clothing. What you wear on the inside matters just as much as what you wear on the outside.

Some have been spotted wearing the wrong kind of underwear with their pants, skirts, or shorts. For women, it can appear as a "turnoff" to men if the wrong underwear is worn and, worse, seen on the outside.

Men's underwear is important, too, especially when wearing those pants that are semi-fit—you know, the nice, classy-looking ones that many men wear these days: flat-front style, straight-leg and not too loose. It can be tough when those jockey lines begin to show.

When a woman wears tight pants or something butt-fitting, it is always best to go with the T-back type of underwear. It may seem unbearable or utterly uncomfortable, but believe me, it is not at all. You forget that it's there after sometime. If you have to wear a regular panty, choose the ones that do not have those thick threadings along the edges that make the panty bulkier; they can be obvious from the outside. It looks unattractive and just doesn't look right.

There's a variety of women's underwear, but for concealing those unwanted edges of the panty, check for those seam-free ones that do not look like they have garters on the edges. The fabric should be smooth-looking. Run your fingers along the edges and feel for consistency of the fabric. Lycra and cotton are most comfortable and popular for everyday wear. Stores like Bench carry these panties good for wearing with tight pants or skirts.

For men, wearing briefs may not seem so "now." But don't worry, I don't think Calvin Klein will ever stop updating his line. There is nothing wrong with them; they are good for those pants that leave little room in the butt area. If you are the adventurous type, go partner with the women and wear those T-backs. Nobody will know. Soft boxer shorts can also go well with fitted pants. As long as the fabric is very, very soft, they are wearable. It depends on how the underwear fits you. Try them all and see for yourself.

Feeling comfortable about what one wears inside is just as important as feeling comfortable about what one wears on the outside. Have a little fun with your undergarments. It does the body good.

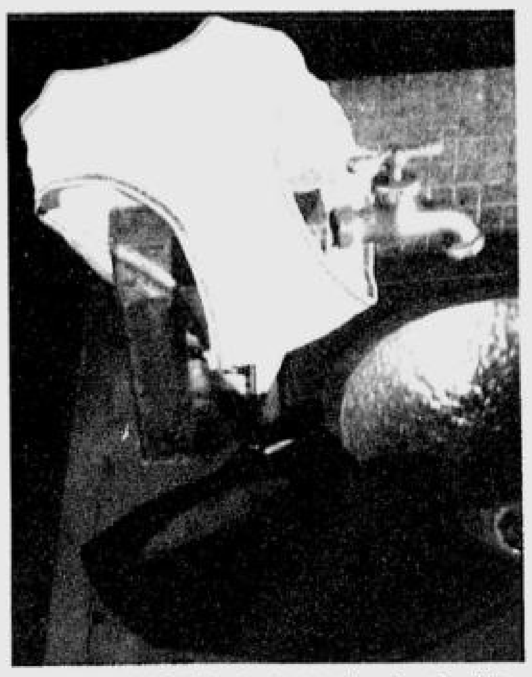
E-mail your comments to camille_cruz@hotmail.com

Looking for the right underwear is a challenge to one's understanding of one's body, looks and needs

ALL ITEMS FROM BENCH
AVAILABLE IN ALL MAJOR MALLS NATIONWIDE

THE BOXER. Gray boxer briefs, P219; gray sport boxer briefs with navy stripe, P249

ATHLETIC. Black boxer brief with jagged waistline, P79; baby pink seam-free panty with white waistline, P98


THE FAMOUS T-back, P189; the classic white with a flare; white panty with navy stripe detail, P75

GRAY classic briefs, P139; black high-leg briefs, P95

LOCATION: AL ESTILO, ROCKWELL LIFESTYLES CENTER

USE YOUR VISA
AND YOU COULD MAKE
₱1,000 — $40,000.

Shop in pesos and get a chance to win in dollars* with the Livin' La VISA Lifestyle Raffle! Just charge a minimum of ₱1,000 to your VISA card and you could win the first prize: U.S. $40,000 in cash credit! There's also a second prize of U.S. $5,000, a third prize of U.S. $1,000 and twenty consolation prizes of U.S. $200 each. It's so easy to join! Just indicate your name, address, telephone number, and signature on the back of the charge slip, put it in a white envelope and drop in drop boxes in selected supermarkets. Or mail your entries to "Livin' La VISA Lifestyle Raffle Promo", c/o Ace Saatchi and Saatchi, 10th flr, Feliza Bldg., 108 Herrera St., Legaspi Village, Makati City, Metro Manila. And if you're a merchant that accepts VISA then you could be a winner too! The merchants of the First to Third prize winners also get dollar prizes! The Livin' la VISA Lifestyle Raffle promo runs from December 15, 2000 to March 15, 2001 only so charge today!

Livin' La VISA
City Lite 88.3
MAGIC 89.9 WTM
103.5 K-lite
VISA Electron
VISA
No. 1 in the Philippines. No.1 in the World.

*If the winner has a dollar account with the card issuer.
See statement stuffers and take-one flyers for details.
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1255 series of 2000.

Spectacular savings everyday for
3 great value days!

Feb.
16•17•18

3-day sale ng bayan

Save up to 50%
on selected items
mallwide

SM City
BACOOR

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1986, Series of 2000

FESTYLE Home

SHIRLEY SANDERS is as Filipina as the local plants whose beauty she loves to show off in tropical gardens

Beauty starts with a hot shower bath.

P705.17 x 12

New Ariva Cristina
Fully Automatic Water Heater
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FREE Installation!

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WE'RE GIVING AWAY 1,000+PRIZES!

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Anne Marie Balidiong
Elsa Beroin
Heidi Pereda
Lucila Cacali
Melanie Perez
Sharyll Corpus
Annie Paromo
Emelyn Martinez
Imelda Dorina Perez
Lynette Villegas
Melanie Valdez
Shirley Nuñez
Arlen Garcia
Gaylene Munsayac
Kathleen Yumul
Ma. Cecilia Malundrez
Mylene Caranto
Tara Milyn Tupas
Arlene Sangalang
Han-na Lee
Leila Molbog
Maria Cristina Agustin
Rizalina Varona
Trixie Ison

Gotesco Grand Central Cal. -2nd Floor
Angelita Manzanilla
Dr. Aileen Ortega
Maria Lourdes Cardano
Jean Tandoc
Monalisa Ribuya
Roselyn Camus
Sheila Marie Reyes
Chiqui Ariola
Felisa Madalla
Maricel Rodriguez
Mildred Carpio
Raymond Lachica
Rowena Vensuelo
Wilhelmina Tapang

Pavilion Mall
Ground Floor
Binan, Laguna
Clemencia Abad
Jasmin Alejado
Jenny-Vi Canaveral
Jobelle Adato
Lulu Blase

Robinsons Cainta
Marcos H-way
Analyn Del Prado
Angelita Ramilo
Ces Tabon
Connie Baluyot
Jenny Rose Guadiz
Marivic Lopez
Teresita Santos

SM City Cebu
2nd Flr. - Bldg. A
Carmelita Roth
Cecilia Apas
Cecille Billona
Fe Roxen Esgana
Gertrude Paragsa
Hope Kho
Mariafe Echavez
Melodie Lagon
Remedios Paradela

Makati -
La'O Bldg.,
Pasay Rd.
Ma Anna Serapio
Ma. Melody Geronimo
Nancy Austria

SM City - Annex Bldg. -
Basement
Mildred Cuelo
Rachel Yap

Ayala Center Cebu
West Entrance
Decie Rose Cerna
Ma. Socorro Cubal
Violeta Villegas

SM City Iloilo,
Lower Ground Floor
Christine Dela Cruz
Jane Ledesma
Lianne Fernandez

Festival Supermall
3rd Level
Caridad Medrana
Catherine Canezal
Marjorie Contaol

SM Southmall, Lower Ground Floor
Alma Mercado
Christine Labada
Grace Anabil
Lynette Amar
Marie Pascual
Ronee Agbayani
Argie Balgos
Emeline Directo
Jennifer Blanca
Mae Liza Amor Reodica
Melissa Nionos

Pedro Gil cor.,
Taft Ave., Ermita Mla.
Flordelina M. Plaza
Josephine Arcilla
Ma. Cecilia Aquino

Robinsons Place Imus
4th Level
Rodliou Jose
Rosita Sasis

SM City Fairview
Lower Ground Floor
Aileen Abayon
Joana Peña
Ma. Bella Paez
Ma. Carmelita Sanchez
Ma. Lorraine Salvador
Ma. Theresa Mallort
Rosemarie Hinolan
Rosemarie Miranda
Tessie Uy

SM City Bacoor
3rd Floor
Gina Cordis
Sharmagne Cariño

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The Original Hair Straightening Specialist

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1331 Series of 2000

Landscape artist as a superstar

By Avie Gochoco-Perez
Photos by Bobot Meru

SHIRLEY Brinas Sanders is a wildly successful landscape artist. A gamely plump 46-year-old, Sanders is as *morena* as she is Filipina despite the deceptive surname. She asked her Irish-American husband to lend her his name even after their divorce. It has international appeal, she says. Today, the name has come to represent perhaps the nation's most sought-after individual in landscaping.

She has created the gardens of celebrities—Bongbong Marcos, former President Joseph Estrada, former Solicitor-General Frank Chavez, former President Fidel Ramos, Lucio Co, Danding and Gretchen Cojuangco, Lucio Tan, Rep. Jerome Paras, Laarni Enriquez—the old rich, the new rich, homes of royalty abroad (10 houses of a sheik in Dubai and that of Sultan Bolkiah of Brunei), five-star hotels, resorts and golf and country clubs, and even a mausoleum (for the late Chief Justice Marcelo B. Fernan in Cebu).

To have a steady supply of plant materials of the quality she needs, Sanders has put up her own nurseries in what, to her, are the "areas of development" after Manila: Tiaong in Quezon (2 hectares); Bacolod (3 ha) and Cebu (5 ha).

She receives 20 to 30 calls a day, each vying to shake hands with her on a garden deal. To save time, Sanders sends a staff member to take photos or do a video tape of the proposed site.

Sanders plan

Sanders' "site development plan" includes drainage, electrical connections and watering system. The plan details the "softscaping" or the plants to be used, and the "hardscaping," or a swimming pool, waterfalls, gazebos, walkways.

"*Ang Pilipino, sanay sa baklas-kalas, walang* planning (The Filipino is used to trial and error, there's no planning). But with long-range planning, if your client has no money yet for a swimming pool but wants one, you can just plant grass—not a tree—where the pool can go in the future," she says. The client is saved the trouble of having to uproot the tree in future to make way for the pool.

More than the money earned from a project, Sanders values sustainable growth of the greenery and the joy and pride the homeowners feel when the garden is turned over to them.

"You have to do things right. If, after two months, the plants die, *alam mo minumura ka na ng kliyente mo* (you know your client is already swearing at you)," she says. Playing it right in her turf means observing where the sun touches the site and when, wind direction, soil composition, and even existing growth in the garden to preserve and enhance it rather than uproot and destroy.

She scours remote areas of the country, climbs mountains and penetrates forests in search of new plant materials.

With her artist's eye, she saw the use of giant cauldrons or the lowly *kawa*, for example, as plant containers or props for waterfalls. She pushed the use of weather-beaten *traviesa* or railroad tiles as garden accents in many of Manila's richest homes.

Must

A Sanders garden is both a beauty to behold and scientifically correct. A "must" is adding at least a foot of soil over the lawn before planting it to grass. Although this may be expensive, she warns of worse consequences if the "must" is ignored: an uneven lawn or bald or brown patches on its surface, especially if a drainage system is absent or misplaced.

"You also have to do soil analysis and 'amend' the soil to improve it. In Forbes Park, you remove 1 cubic meter of the adobe and palms will thrive," she says.

She went into landscaping with P20,000 in

LANDSCAPE/ p.F2

End of Season

SALE

*Up to 70% off
On selected items

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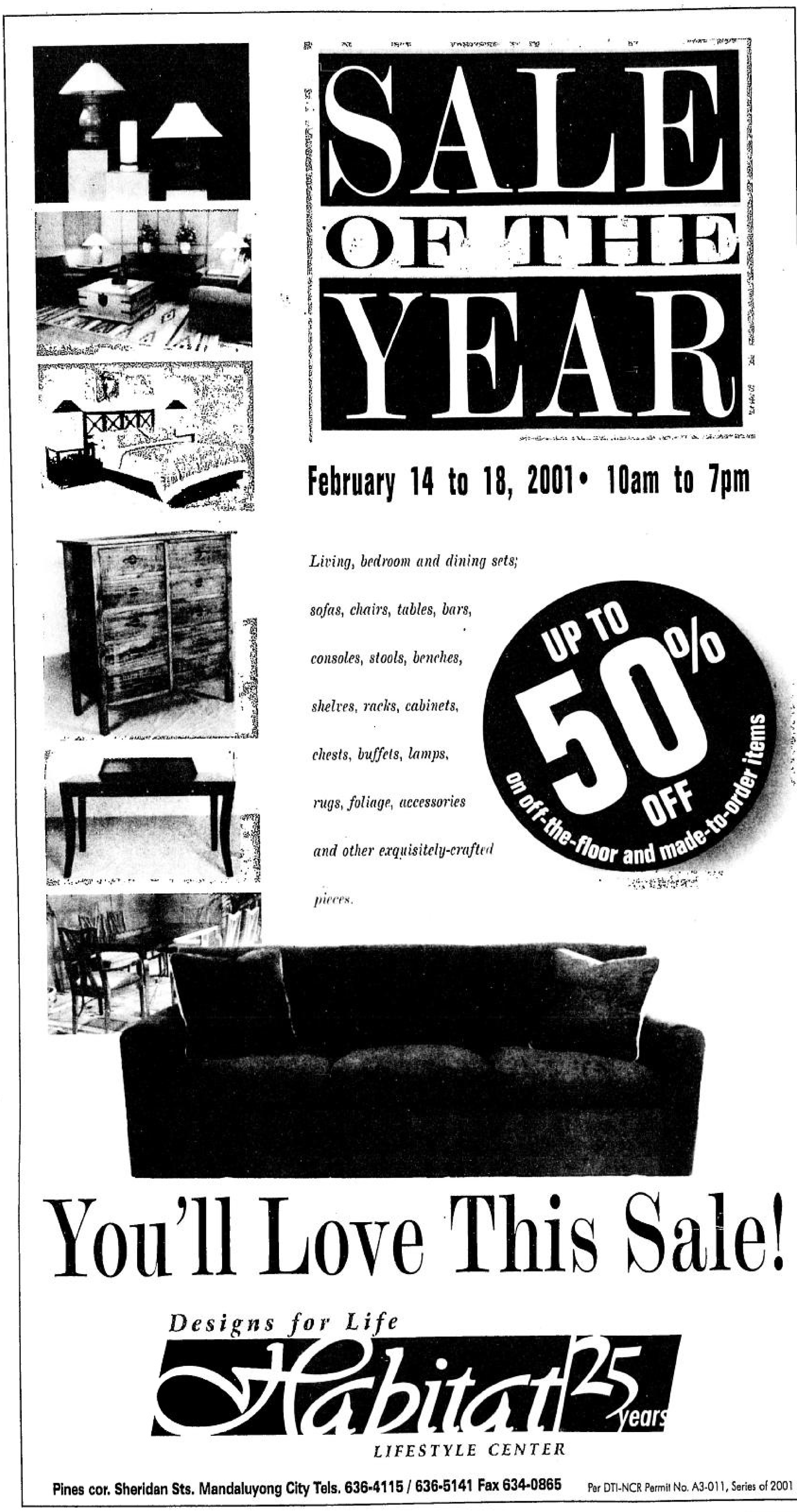
MAKATI • SHANGRI-LA PLAZA • CUBAO • HARRISON PLAZA • ALABANG • CEBU

Per DTI NCR Permit No. 0121 Series of 2001



SALE OF THE YEAR

February 14 to 18, 2001• 10am to 7pm

Living, bedroom and dining sets;

sofas, chairs, tables, bars,

consoles, stools, benches,

shelves, racks, cabinets,

chests, buffets, lamps,

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and other exquisitely-crafted

pieces.

UP TO 50% OFF on off-the-floor and made-to-order items

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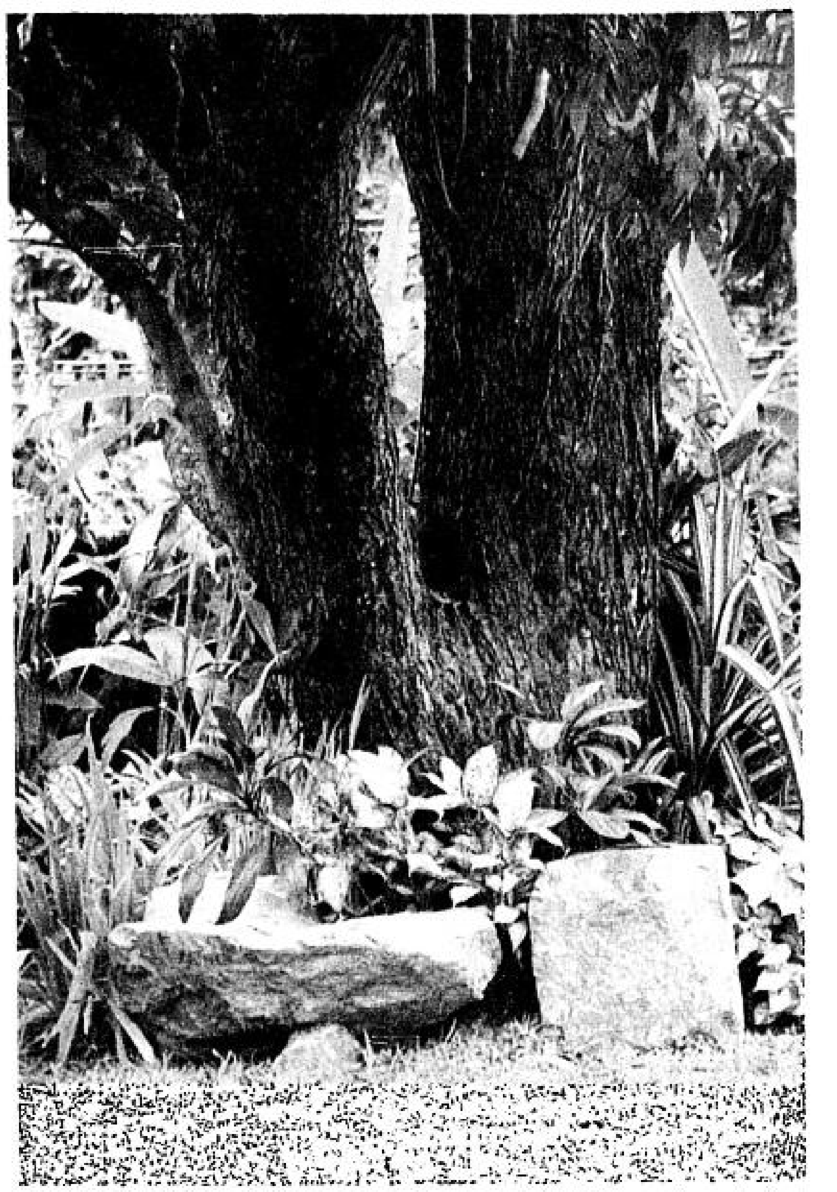
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A3-011, Series of 2001



SANDERS enhances, not uproots, existing growth in the garden, planting dumb cane, ti plants and variegated *pandan* beneath this old tree as if to stress the tree's solid form.

Landscape artist as a superstar

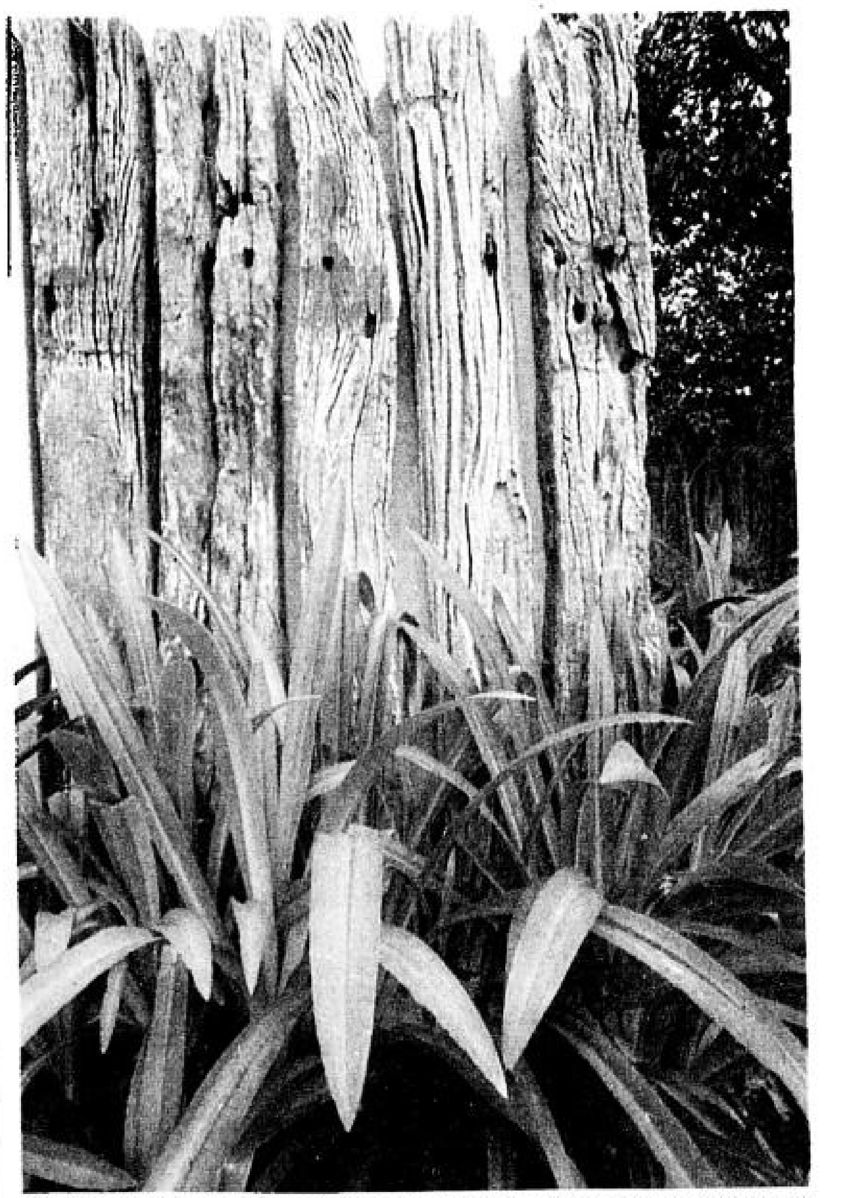
(From page F1)

capital, a small office in Makati, and a P5,000-deal involving a 50-sq m garden. It was a friend's. "We bought the plants together," Sanders says. She did a tropical garden for her friend.

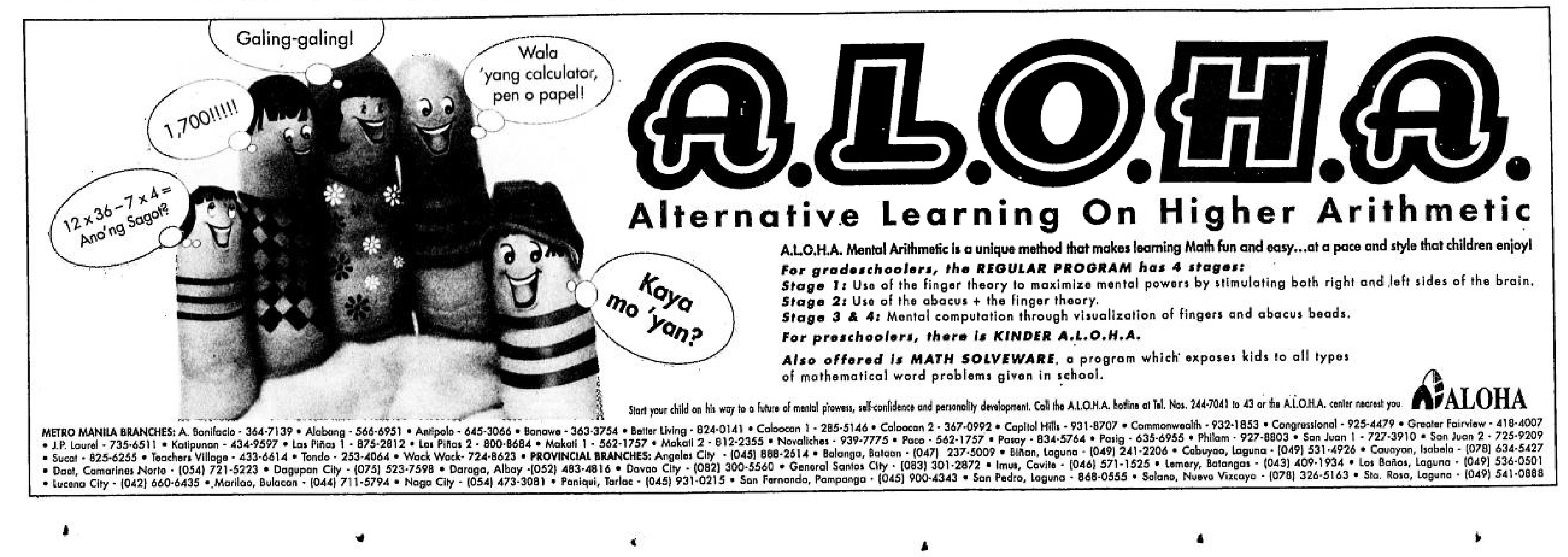
Resourcefulness was key to her surviving the tough early years in the business.

As a youthful 24-year-old then, she went to "*mga eskinita* (narrow walkways) from barrio to barrio in remote areas" for plant materials she could buy for half the price which they fetched in the garden stalls along the highway. "My clients were amazed that my plants

LANDSCAPE/ p.F4



OLD railroad tiles are erected on the walls of the garden, their gnarled, rough texture softened underneath by a row of plants echoing the railroad tiles' shape.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1,700!!!!!
Wala 'yang calculator, pen o papel!
12 x 36 – 7 x 4 = Ano'ng Sagot?
Kaya mo 'yan?

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Avon Running is on

AVON, the global beauty company, invites all girls and women of all ages and fitness levels to join in its campaign for women's health and fitness. The annual Avon Running National Championship will be held on Feb. 18 at Ayala Avenue, Makati City. The race consists of a 10-k run and 5-k run and fitness walk.

The first-place winner of the 10-k event will receive P25,000, a trophy and will be the country's representative to Avon Running's Global Championship in Budapest, Hungary in May. The 10-k top Avon lady finisher also wins P10,000 and a chance to compete in Budapest. Other prizes at stake are: P12,000 and a medal for second place, and P7,000 and a medal for third place. There will also be cash prizes of P1,000 for winners in the different age categories.

GOINGS-ON

This year, 5-k race winners will not go home empty-handed as Avon will be giving away P10,000 and a trophy for first place; P5,000 and a medal for second place, and P3,000 and a medal for third place.

Schools with the most number of finishers will also receive cash prizes. First prize is P12,000, second prize is P5,000 and third prize is P3,000.

Interested participants may register at selected schools and Avon branches at Shaw, Taft, Las Piñas, Edsa, Sampaloc and Malolos, Bulacan. Visit www.avon.com.

THE GLOBAL Cable TV Inc., recently signed an agreement with the program "Window to Taiwan" on GCTV-UR Channel 4. Present during the contract-signing were (from left): Philip Chien, GCTV president; Lorlyn Garcia, programming manager; Robert Shih, Teco information division director, and Owen Bor-Wen Chu, information officer.

SALE. Momento offers up to 70-percent discount on selected items from until Mar. 11. Grab this chance to bring home chic items from Bruno Magli, Cole Hann, Rodo, Laurel, Furla and Maraolo with big discounts. Shoes, bags, accessories and ready-to-wear are all on sale as a post Valentine's Day gift from Momento. Visit Momento Greenbelt, Momento Megamall Bldg. B and Momento Alabang Town Center.

LAUNCH PARTY. MTV Style Fashion Accessories gets in gear for the MTV Channel 41 launch party on Feb. 17, 6 p.m., at The Fort, Global City, Taguig. Made even more attractive by VJ Donita Rose, MTV Style features an entire line of fashion-forward accessories in tune with the music video generation. Featuring silver and leather bracelets inspired by rap rhythms and glow sticks gleaned from the club culture, MTV Style makes a statement that appeals to all kinds of music enthusiasts. Sandy Alfonso-Olfato of Jammin' Gems is the exclusive licensee of MTV Style Fashion Accessories. Visit the MTV Style booth at the party to complete the experience.

FUND-RAISING CONCERT. Samahang Operasyong Sagip and Brotherhood of Medical Scholars will hold a post-Valentine fund-raising concert to support its countrywide medical and dental missions today, 7 p.m. at the Malate Catholic School Gymnasium featuring South Border. Tickets are available at selected Little Caesars outlets. Call 712-6486.

OPENING. Bukal ng Tipan (Wellspring of Covenants), a center for renewal and mission, opens tomorrow at 6 p.m. The center, popularly known as Maryhill Retreat Center, is located in Taytay. The opening will be graced by the Angono National Symphonic Band under Nonoy Diestro and the famous Belgian trumpetist, Theo Martens. Call 658-5064 or 660-6737 (fax).

GENERAL ASSEMBLY. The Philippine Association of Teachers of Library Science (PATLS) will hold the oath-taking ceremony of newly elected officers and general assembly on Feb. 27, 2 p.m., at the Azotea de Monzon, Manuel Luis Quezon University, R. Hidalgo, Quiapo, Manila. Call Edna at 731-3034 or 731-3101, local 8343; Helen at 735-8508, or Amy at 735-9406.

CULTURAL WEEK. UP Manila's Department of Arts and Communication (DAC), with the Chancellor's Committee on Culture and the Arts, is holding its annual Culture Week until Feb. 19. Activities lined up for this year's culture week include a lecture on culture and development, a lecture-demonstration on digital photography, a panel discussion on arts management featuring managers of various art institutions and organizations, poetry reading and a play production to be participated in by Philippine arts majors. There will also be poetry writing contest, a photography competition and a quiz bee. Call 523-1628.

COMPETITION. Godiva will hold its 1st Interschool FunArt Competition on Feb.24-25 at the Exploratorium Atrium, Festival Supermall, Filinvest Alabang. All entries, winning or nonwinning, will be displayed for judging and for public viewing at the Exploratorium Atrium. Call 815-1387 or visit Godiva Inc., Room 22 Matrinco Building, 2178 Pasong Tamo, Makati.

DANCE-DRAMA. Marikina Cultural Affairs, Philippine Folk Dance Society and Marikina City Schools present "Lola Kikay," a dance-drama from the Barasoain Kalinangan Foundation to be held today at 5 p.m., at the Sentrong Pangkultura ng Marikina. The show honors the 101 years of national artist Francisca Reyes Aquino and 10 years of the Francisca Reyes Aquino Memorial Foundation. Call 523-1797 to -98.

DINNER-DANCE. All-night ballroom dancing called "Masquerade in Venice" will be held at the Shangri-La Manila Hotel's Rizal Ballroom on Feb. 28. The Masquerade is a dinner benefit for the La Mesa Watershed Reforestation Project. Dinner tickets are priced at P3,500 (Gold) and P3,000 (Silver). Bantay Kalikasan is a program of ABS-CBN Foundation Inc., headed by Gina Lopez. Call 415-2227.

LAUNCHING. The Philippine Foundation for Science and Technology received a grant from Lucent Technologies Foundation for its newest project dubbed "Philippine Science Centrum (PSC) Educational Pathways." The project will be launched on Feb. 22, 9 a.m., at the DECS Bulwagan ng Karunungan, University of Life Complex, Pasig City.

MUSICAL PLAY. The Miriam College Communication Arts (CA) juniors Section 3 will present a spoof of the renowned Broadway musical "Miss Saigon." The musical-comedy, dubbed "Missed Saigon," is set on Feb. 21 and 25 at the College mini theater in Quezon City. Call 645-0055 or 0917-5001600.

Entertaining Bible stories from PowerMark

OMF Literature Inc. will hold the Philippine launch of "PowerMark," the first world-class kid-friendly Christian comic book, on Feb. 17, 4:30 p.m. at The Children's Library, 4/F Robinsons Galleria, Edsa corner Ortigas Avenue, QC.

Published in the Philippines by OMF Literature Inc. by special arrangement with international publisher PowerMark Productions, "PowerMark" tells the story of the young Filipino soldier, Capt. Mark Cruz, leader of an Alliance Alpha force team. After being wounded while defending children from Leviathan forces under Fang Shaw's command, Captain Cruz was reassigned to the International Christian Coalition. With the help of 11 gifted children from different countries, Captain Cruz—nicknamed PowerMark by his young teammates—carries out his mission: to create virtual reality simulations of stories from the Bible in response to the relentless advance of entertainment technology that has reduced interest in reading among young people. Meanwhile, Leviathan forces threaten PowerMark and his young team because of Fang Shaw's mysterious hatred for PowerMark. PowerMark is produced by a seasoned team of comics professionals, most of whom—like Steven Butler and Danny Bulanadi—have worked on popular titles produced by the likes of DC and Marvel.

Not surprisingly, the goal of the comic book's International Christian Coalition reflects the mission statement of PowerMark Productions that says, in part, "...to present the Holy Scriptures to our youth and children in an entertaining fashion while remaining true to the message there-in." What they produced is a 12-issue action-packed series that promotes positive values and yet is at par in quality and entertainment value with popular comics produced by comics giants DC and Marvel. Each issue is priced at P49.75, one third of the American priced $2.95.

OMF Literature will launch the PowerMark series at the Children's Library where kids can meet PowerMark himself! Fun games and giveaways await the adventurous, aged 8-80, as they learn more about PowerMark, his team and their mission. Call Rhoda Ninotranco at 532-5736. Admission is free.

FLY, MALAYA, FI
EB ARY 20

CALTEX DONATES EAGLE BOOK TO MUSEO PAMBATA

Caltex Phils. Inc. country chair, Nicholas Florio gives copies of the children's storybook "Fly, Malaya, Fly!" to Museo Pambata Foundation Inc. president Nina Yuson, Ph.D. as a donation to its library during the Manila launch of the publication. Caltex is committed to educate the public, especially the youth, on the sad plight of the national bird, which is being threatened with extinction. The book dramatizes this crusade through an engaging easy-to-read narrative, illustrated with colorful acrylic paintings. Shown from left, Ana Ong, CPI corporate communications coordinator; Gen. William Hotchkiss III, fund-raising committee chair of the Philippine Eagle Foundation; Longlong Pesquira, book artist; Grace Chong and her son Juan Ruffo Chong, book authors.

Special New Year Offer,
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GOODBYE, MATH TRAUMA!
...HELLO, A.L.O.H.A!

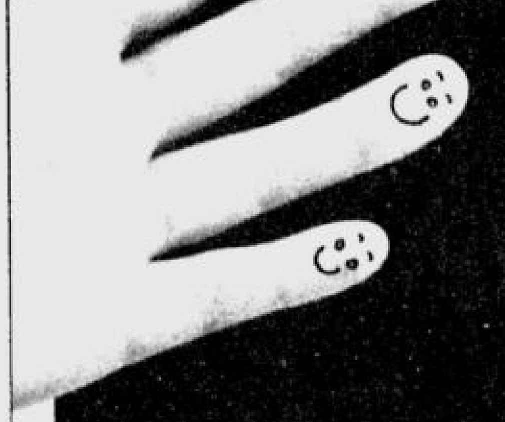
According to Prof. Mer Elenzano, managing director of A.L.O.H.A. (Alternative Learning On Higher Arithmetic), anybody can be good in Math given the proper training. In China, a discipline known as Mental Arithmetic has been used for over a century to hone skills in computation. A.L.O.H.A. adapted this time-tested technology to use Math for balanced mental development and confidence-building.

A.L.O.H.A. works by maximizing mental abilities in 4 progressive stages: *At stage 1*, calculation using the finger theory is taught. Both left (analytic) and right (creative) sides of the brain are active as they control the movements of the right and left fingers. *At stage 2*, the child adds and subtracts using the abacus along with the finger theory. The greater number of abacus beads expands computing possibilities. The multiplication table is introduced. *At stage 3*, the child computes mentally through visualization of the abacus beads and the fingers. *At stage 4*, division is introduced.

What are the benefits of enrolling in A.L.O.H.A? Because A.L.O.H.A. unleashes inherent mental powers of both sides of the brain, a child trained in the program does well in Math and in other subjects, too. Self confidence and a positive attitude toward learning in general is likewise developed. And unlike some methods that isolate the child and employ rigorous exercises, A.L.O.H.A. makes learning fun and easy. Students learn together and become friends in the process. Remarkable progress is made without the child being conscious of the work he has actually done, as teachers focus on positive reinforcement to make learning Math as enjoyable as possible!

**To complement the 4-stage program for gradeschoolers, A.L.O.H.A also offers the Math Solveware Program which exposes kids to all types of mathematical word problems given in school. For preschoolers, there is the Kinder Aloha Program. Call 244-70-41 to 43 for more information.*

ALOHA



Getting rid of garbage through resource recovery

SEEING GREEN

Doris Gaskell Nuyda

TO RECYCLING advocate Narda N. Camacho, the solution to the garbage problem means one thing—resource recovery, which is why she hails the new administration's first law—the Solid Waste Management Act. The law adopts a waste-reduction program through segregation, recycling and composting for nationwide implementation, and prohibits squatting on open dumpsites.

What is not generally known is that Camacho was consulted closely by the legislators concerned, and so it is not surprising to find many of her inputs in the provisions.

At a presscon she called recently, Camacho repeated many of the practices she has been advocating these past years. She passed some of them to us even before the law was signed (Seeing Green, PDI Lifestyle, 01/19/01). She also explained the practical applications of the new law's recycling provisions.

A National Commission on Solid Waste Management (NCSWM) under the Office of the President will be established as the one agency responsible for the research and supervision of all types of waste and their disposal. They include agricultural, hospital, household and industrial wastes. In these functions, the NCSWM takes over garbage collection/disposal from the Metro Manila Development Authority, which nevertheless participates in the matter of waste problems as member of the Commission.

As the Commission will be composed of about 14 members from government and three from the private sector, better coordination of programs can be expected. Also to be created as a support organization is the National Packaging Research Institute, which will look into substitutes for non-environmental-friendly packaging. Camacho points out that such packagings comprise 70 percent of what's thrown in dumpsites.

Segregating garbage at the source is now mandatory and will be implemented from household to local government levels. Initial requirement for segregation are separate containers for organic waste, recyclables and hazardous waste that cannot be converted into compost, or returned to the factories.

Organic waste

There are two ways of disposing organic waste: by household composting, and with a bioreactor which local governments can set up in their cities and towns. Camacho mentions the bioreactor model built by the Department of Science and Technology that can be installed for municipal use. With that system, LGUs need only to collect the waste in their areas in separate trucks and on specific days, and then process it into compost. No need for landfills.

Digester tanks can be set up right in markets and slaughterhouses to eliminate the need to haul the organic waste from these sources.

Because of the high cost of virgin pulp and the slowly decimating forests, the paper and plastic industries hardly import these materials anymore. So those industries now rely on scrap or recyclable paper for their operations.

With a few exceptions, all kinds of plastic can be returned to their manufacturers, which buy back plastic bottles and containers. Bottling companies as well as glass and steel corporations likewise buy even broken glass, clear or colored, and no matter what they contained—medicines, cosmetics, etc. Already, Camacho says, we are using recycled car batteries, computer cartridges and ink jets.

Shredders and converters

Camacho's report includes facts on rubber tires (about four million are produced a year here). She suggests the construction of a tire shredder to be used for road repair at a savings of millions of pesos.

She also recommends use of a machine (hydromex) that converts residual waste into hollow blocks and paints. It is cheap, she says, has potential for wide range of uses, and requires no expensive imported materials to build.

From Camacho's report, we get an underlying message—there is now a law regulating garbage disposal, and there is the technology that can help facilitate the job. With options open, part of the battle is won. The next step is to find the funds.

Make your windows drape for success

YOU'LL enjoy window dressing with Our Home's new curtain collection by Arquitectonica.

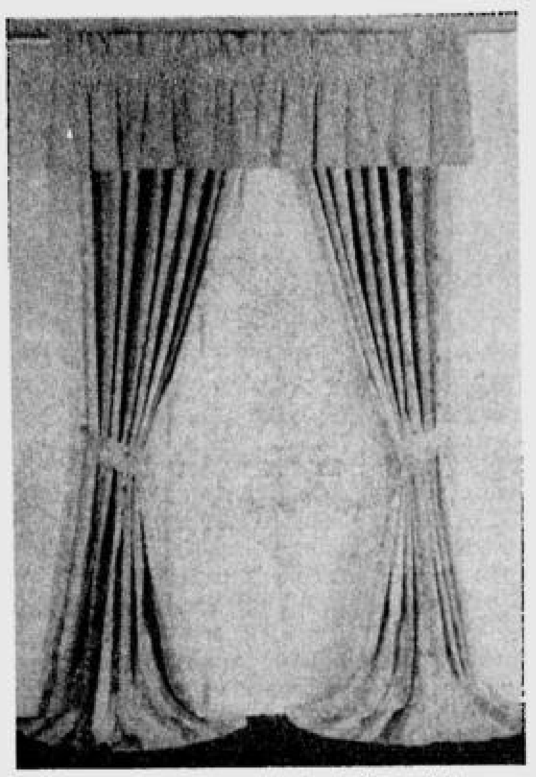
Curtains, after all, add a lot of character to a room and warm windows as they delightfully play on light.

Our Home's curtain call: pretty silk banded panel drapes, dramatic damask pleated curtains with fringe accents, elegant velveteen curtains with ribbons, gold organdy pocket curtains bordered by red tab drapes.

There's even more decorative draping ahead with inner veils and valances, as well as adjustable rods in wrought iron, wood and chrome.

Here are some tips on how to make your windows drape for success from Our Home:

- Remember that lighting is key. You will probably want your room to have as much light and sunshine as possible. Study the quality of the natural light and judge how much your windows provide when planning what type of curtains to use.
- If you like curtains, then have beautiful windows warmed by materials you like. Our Home's curtain fabrics range from light and breezy chiffon to delicate silk to ornate damask.
- Keep your curtains straightforward. Elaborate window dressings—heavy draperies and valances—seem outdated in most rooms today and are expensive dust catchers.
- When deciding which curtain styles to choose, consider what you want to do with the room. If you want to add color, warmth, pattern, or spark to an awkward window situation, try straight—hanging lined panels with ample fullness with an interesting heading.



SILK valance accents this dotted panel drape over a white veil.

BLACK adjustable wrought iron snail rod is used to hang this Alesi striped curtain. A chiffon panel drape in contrasting color is used as an inner curtain.

- Examine all ways of decorative headings—the way the material is gathered at the top to give it fullness—before you settle on one.
- Do some research—magazines are particularly useful in helping you decide on your dream drapes.

The Arquitectonica curtain collection is available at Our Home at the LG/L SM Megamall A.

Roxas heeds senior citizens' outcry

THE CONSUMER

Marietta Velasco Giron

THAT was a quick response from DTI Secretary Mar Roxas on consumer complaints regarding noncompliance of some business establishments to the law that provides 20 percent discount privileges to senior citizens. (The Consumer, PDI Lifestyle, 02/09/01).

According to Secretary Roxas, many business establishments will try to avoid giving senior citizens their full 20 percent privilege discount until the Bureau of Internal Revenue grants the long due tax credit provided by R.A. 7432 or the senior citizens privilege' law.

Here's the message of Secretary Roxas to senior citizens:

"The issue falls squarely on our mandate to promote and protect consumer welfare. We, therefore, wrote Commissioner Rene Banez of the Bureau of Internal Revenue for a clarification on the guidelines enabling retailers to claim tax credit for discounts to senior citizens. The lack of guidelines has often been cited by several retailers, restaurants, hotels, or *boticas*.

"Under Section 4 (a) of Republic Act 7432, retailers must give discounts of 20 percent to senior citizens 'provided that private establishments may claim the cost as tax credit.' But for as long as there are no BIR guidelines on tax credits, the stores claimed that they could not continue to shoulder the cost. Some large establishments do extend discounts. They include airlines, theaters, drugstores and supermarkets.

"The intent of the law is to continue with the valued Filipino tradition of showing our care and respect for our senior citizens…we will seek resolution of this issue." (Sgd. Mar Roxas, DTI Secretary).

Globus cares for senior citizens

Globus Care Inc.'s president Jimmy Po explains why some drugstores do not give senior citizens (SC) the full quantity of medical products specified in the doctor's prescription order.

"We want to apportion the meager supply of certain drugs such that we can serve a bigger number of our customers," the CEO told us. He added that some drugstores also reduce the quantity of medicine per purchase when it is obvious that the SC is buying more than he actually needs.

"Moreover, we have been warned that the SC's discount privilege is used by unscrupulous buy-and-sell dealers. These dealers earn a lot of profit, considering that we at Globus only make a 5 percent margin of profit on most of our items, not to mention the 20 percent SC privilege discount.

According to Po, drug retailers are losing heavily because of the SC discount privileges. He said, it would not be so bad if the BIR, once and for all, start giving business establishments the tax credit specified in the senior citizens' law.

By the way, Globus is one of the few drug companies that provide free clinical laboratory service to the poor.

Readers' comment:

ARNEL Ma. Salgado, RN of arnelsalgado@yahoo.com explains why there are nurses who do not deserve to be called caregivers.

He wrote: "Nurses in the Philippines are underpaid and cannot afford to finance their professional advancement. Many of them are inexperienced. Then, it is also a known practice by some hospitals to hire for free newly registered nurses in exchange for a certificate of employment that can be used to apply for jobs abroad. The good nurses are working in the US, UK, Netherlands, Algeria, Middle East and other countries.

"Despite all, there are still very good nurses around. Please write about these nurses, who, despite the lure of foreign employment, choose to work in the country."

Beware of spoiled products

READERS have sent us complaints about spoiled products sold at local supermarkets. Insects in a hotcake mix despite the expiration date on June 2001. Coagulated fresh milk with March expiry date. Spoiled calcium-plus milk. Cooking oil with water. We have reported the complaints to the concerned manufacturers, and we will publish their findings in our next column.

E-mail the author at giron@csi.com.ph

Book on Baguio to be launched

A NEW coffee-table book, "Flowers of Baguio," will be off the press in time for the celebrated annual Baguio flower festival, Panagbenga. The 150-page fully illustrated tome is published by Anvil Publishing/National Bookstore with the Federation of Philippine Photographers Foundation Inc., Agfa/Photokina Marketing, City of Baguio, Department of Tourism, John Hay Poro Point Development Corp., Mountain Studio and the Province of Benguet.

PANAGBENGA Baguio flower festival

Formal launching will be on Feb. 18, 3 p.m., at the Market Encounter Landscape Exhibit area at Camp John Hay in Baguio City. New York-based author Reynaldo G. Alejandro and co-author Vicente Roman S. Santos will be present to sign copies of the book. Guests of honor during the launch will include Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon, Sen. Loren Legarda-Leviste and Ms Sonia M. Roco.

The book embodies the color and vitality of Baguio's most prized possessions: its flowers and its people. A first of its kind, the 150-page coffee-table book is the first in a series of the Bulaklak Book Series. Future titles will include "Flowers of Davao," "Flowers of Southern Tagalog Region," "Flowers of Iloilo and Bacolod" as well as "Gardens of Alabang," "Gardens of the Makati Villages" and floralscapes by the Philippines' well-known floral artists such as Rachy Cuna, Tony Padilla, Toni Parsons and others.

"Flowers of Baguio" includes an introductory essay by Llita Logarta. Creative direction is by Roberto C. Caballero, art direction by Orland S. Punzalan, book and cover design by Helen Uy Punzalan with contributing photographers Eduviges Huang, Lito Beltran, Vincent Ramiscal, Dewey Sergio, George Uy and Victor Sison.

In his foreword, Baguio flower festival chair Damaso Bangaoet Jr. proudly talks about their city's floral legacy that "speaks not only of a way of life borne of the molding of our lowland roots, foreign origins and our highland home. It also captures the parallel evolution of a floral industry that continues to be enriched with each new variety that blooms in our fair city." "Flowers of Baguio" traces the development of an industry and its influence on the city's cultural and environmental landscape and its people.

The tome includes chapters on floral diversity, Baguio parks and gardens, floralscapes by Baguio florists, Rachy Cuna, the 2000 Baguio Flower Festival and from Benguet to Manila.

Principal author Reynaldo Alejandro has received praise and acclaim for his many other books such as "Lamesa," "Selyo," "Pasig: River of Life" and "Pasko!," among others.

Highlights of the book are the inspired floralscapes by well-known Manila floral architect Rachy Cuna using Baguio flora.

Adjunct to the launching is the international Filipino artist Rosalinda Roman's display of her floral pieces inspired by the flowers of Baguio.

The landscape artist as a superstar

(From page F2)

were cheap. It's one reason I was able to establish my credibility."

Two incidents show how, with "*kapal ng mukha, tibay ng dibdib* (forthrightness, guts) and patience," she survived those years, and more.

The Intramuros Administration once had an order for 50,000 pieces of Violetas, plants with white or violet flowers and grown as hedges in barrios. "*Ginagamit ang mga 'yun na kulahan* (clothes were draped on them for sunbleaching)," she remembers. The Violeta being a Spanish plant, Sanders knew she had seen the plant lining a street in New Manila, Quezon City where Spanish houses abound.

With her gardener and her driver, she pretended to be a Metro Aide, neatly trimming the Violeta hedges. "Hey, what are you doing there? Puñeta!," a *doña* from one of the old homes called out to her. "Ma'am," answered Sanders, "we are manicuring the hedges so they will look neat and beautiful." Meantime, among the three of them, they were collecting enough cuttings to fill the 50,000-piece order. In 14 days, she sold the established cuttings to the Intramuros Administration for P5 each. "I got my first car from the proceeds—all of P250,000," this 'Metro Aide' chirps happily.

Another time, the GSIS reclamation area needed 10,000 pieces of Secreto de Amor, a climbing vine with white and red heart-shaped flowers, to 'forest' it.

"*Layasero ako* (I was always going out). I knew that in Morong, Rizal, all the houses in the barrio had Secreto de Amor. I pretended to be a teacher and told the barrio people I needed cuttings for a project in school," she says. The barrio folk obliged happily. The result: she sold 10,000 pieces of Secreto de Amor to the reclamation project for P10 a plant. She was richer by P100,000.

When she started some two decades ago, no one appreciated the value—aesthetic and monetary—of good landscaping for a home. Even her father had warned her that casting her lot with plants would send her to the poor house. She was a trained medical technologist, and he pleaded with her to stay on course. But Sanders knew she didn't want to work around hospitals or laboratories. "*Ayokong makita ang mga pasyenteng nahihirapan* (I didn't want to see patients suffering)," she says.

She reckons it took her five years of persistent knocking on the gates of the rich in exclusive villages before her efforts paid off.

"When I started, *pinipilit ko ang mga tao* (I was forcing people), 'please *naman, magpagawa na kayo ng* garden (let me do your garden). *Ang* feeling *nila noong una, halaman lang 'yan, mura lang* (before, they felt it was just plants, and plants were cheap)," and were unwilling to pay her to shape their garden.

Today, with her earnings, she has built her father a P4-million house. She has also built houses for herself in Cebu, Iriga, Bacolod and Boracay. Still, she chooses to live in a La Vista townhouse in Quezon City near the Ateneo where her 10-year-old son Paul George studies. "I have no time do my own garden," she grins.

Sanders pays tribute to her mother as the one influencing factor behind her love for. plants. Mother kept a beautiful garden in their home at Villamor Air Base. They had a corner house and "Mommy" lined its perimeter with pots of bougainvillea, always abloom in a riot of colors, be it the dry or rainy months.

The "secret" to Mommy's success? The bougainvilleas were nourished with human urine, diluted in water. The acidity of the urea in the urine nudged the bougainvilleas into constant flowering.

"*Sasabihin ng* mother *ko sa aming mga bata, 'Ngayong gabi, 'wag kayong umihi sa banyo, ha? Umihi kayo sa arinola'* (My mother would tell us kids, 'tonight, don't pee in the toilet. Use the bedpan')." Mother then watered her bougainvilleas with the night's collection from the bedpans.

The urge to clean and green the metropolis years ago led the Landscaping Contractors Association of the Philippines—of which Sanders was secretary—to think of planting trees on the center islands of Edsa.

The Association asked the city councils to pass a resolution saying they would maintain the trees, but was refused. "*Hindi raw nila pagkakakitaan* (They said they wouldn't earn from it)," a dismayed Sanders recalls. The Association was forced to abandon its proposal.

She marvels at the beauty of the center islands of Dubai in the Middle East, planted to old date trees and flowering shrubs. "*Naka*-timer *pa ang* sprinkler system," she gushes. Dubai has started to forest itself and as a result, "*umuulan na sa kanila* (it's already raining there)."

Sanders' favorite clients are those "who give you full, blanket authority, *ang sarap* (it feels good). *Parang na-e*-express *mo ang sarili mo* (you an express yourself)." Such clients are usually the "old rich, are relaxed, like gardening or are plant hobbyists."

The new rich "don't make *tawad* (they don't haggle)," something she wouldn't take against them even if they did. "The old rich make *tawad*, which is reasonable. They value their money. '*Di mo naman ninakaw 'yun, 'di ba* (you didn't steal that money anyway, right)?" she observes.

Book launch

Is there a Sanders style? Her third book, "Philippine Gardens, Collector's Edition" set to be launched Feb. 22 at 5:30 p.m. at the Hotel Inter-Continental Manila, puts it this way: "Her gardens are infused with the artistic innovations of the West, the contemplative philosophy of the East and then merrily designed with a Filipino *halo-halo* consciousness. This is the signature of the Sanders approach." The book illustrates some of the best of her gardens, inspiring ideas on how to group ordinary plants into masses of color and texture worthy of a second, third and fourth look in one's garden.

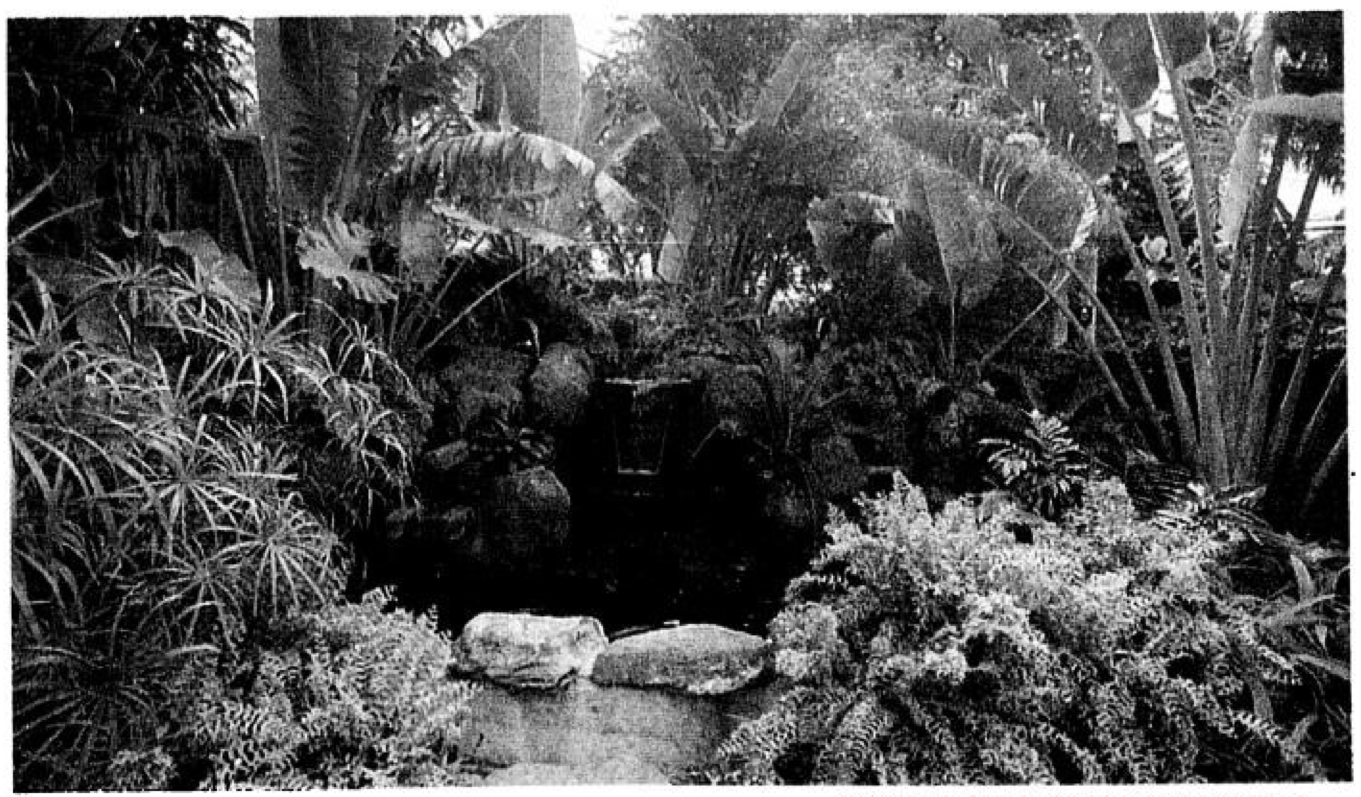
"I like using ordinary plants. When you group them together and then *maganda ang* blending (the blending is done well), your garden will be beautiful. Using very expensive plants will not *guarantee na gaganda ang* garden *mo* (that

LANDSCAPE/ p.F5

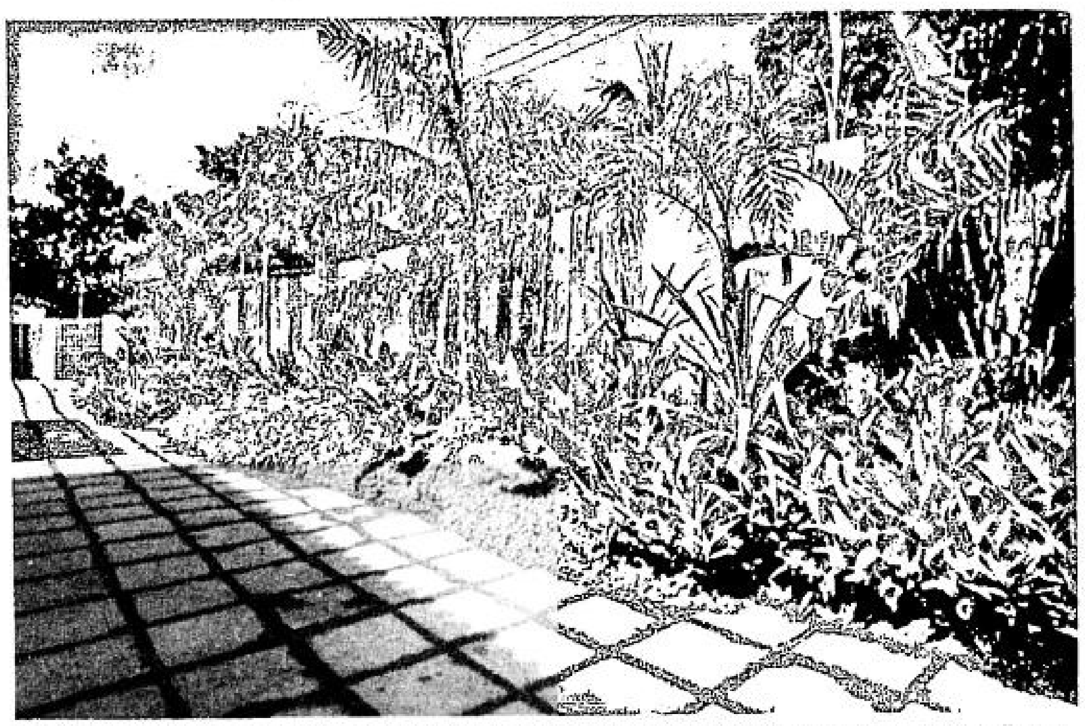
POTTED red poinsettias lead the eye to the Indian-inspired main door, intricately carved by a local craftsman from old wood.

Landscape artist as a superstar

The secret of Shirley Brinas Sanders' highly successful career as garden virtuoso is simple: plan and do it right



A SANDERS composition in Fred and Kerri Uytengsu's garden in South Forbes Park focuses on water falling from two *kawa* into a pond surrounded by boulders softened by traveller's palms, fishtail ferns, giant *gabi*, bromeliads, olive palms and umbrella plants



THE UYTENGSU driveway is paved with square *piedra* Pinoy and laced with the mainly ordinary plants that, under Sanders' masterful hand, present an arresting living stage year-round.

SANDERS' definitive book

(From page F4)

your garden will be beautiful). The plants have to be easy to maintain," she says.

Former First Lady Amelita M. Ramos, who wrote the foreword of the book, perhaps says it best: "...Sanders' intimate knowledge of local plant varieties suited to a particular location is put to an artistic use as she builds her gardens according to the 'genius of the place.'"

Rich clientele

Sanders today enjoys fabulous pay from her equally fabulously rich clientele. Sultan Bolkiah of Brunei paid her P500,000 a month for two months when she worked on two of his gardens. The 2,000-sq m garden she was doing in Wack-Wack for Laarni Enriquez was a P7.8-million deal, a "Class A" Mediterranean-tropical garden. It would have had a "meditation garden" too, where you enter a cave with glass that serves as backdrop for a curtain of water to slide over. Work on the project has stopped due to the controversy over the property's ownership.

Despite the grand projects, Sanders still takes on small projects, which, at one point, was a P50,000-job. Those who venture to seek her services despite a tight budget are rewarded by a touched Sanders with "the best" that their money can buy.

"I am identified with the rich. So '*yung mga malalakas ang loob*, those who have the guts *na hanapin ako* (to look for me) in spite of being scared that I will not pay them any attention, *ayokong ma*-frustrate *sila* (I don't want to frustrate them). It is not the money involved. We can use the same design as for an expensive garden but we can use not very expensive plants. I am very, very flexible," she insists. "*At makikita mo, sila pa ang masipag mag*-refer *sa iyo sa ibang tao* (And you'll see, they will refer you to others in earnest)."

She is "*maurirat* (finicky)," a trait clients much appreciate in her. She can drop by a garden unannounced, "inspect on the spot and say '*Oy, Inday, 'di kayo nagdidilig* (you don't water the garden) or *hindi ka yata nag-i*-insecticide (you don't spray the plants with insectide).' As a landscape artist, the garden is living propaganda for you. Make sure it is well tended. We offer maintenance service for up to six months. We teach the help how to do it."

Sanders says she has "to start dreaming" about her future. The "master plan" for such a dream is in the works, involving the acquisition of up to 15 ha of land on which she dreams of building a resort featuring different gardens with matching cottages.

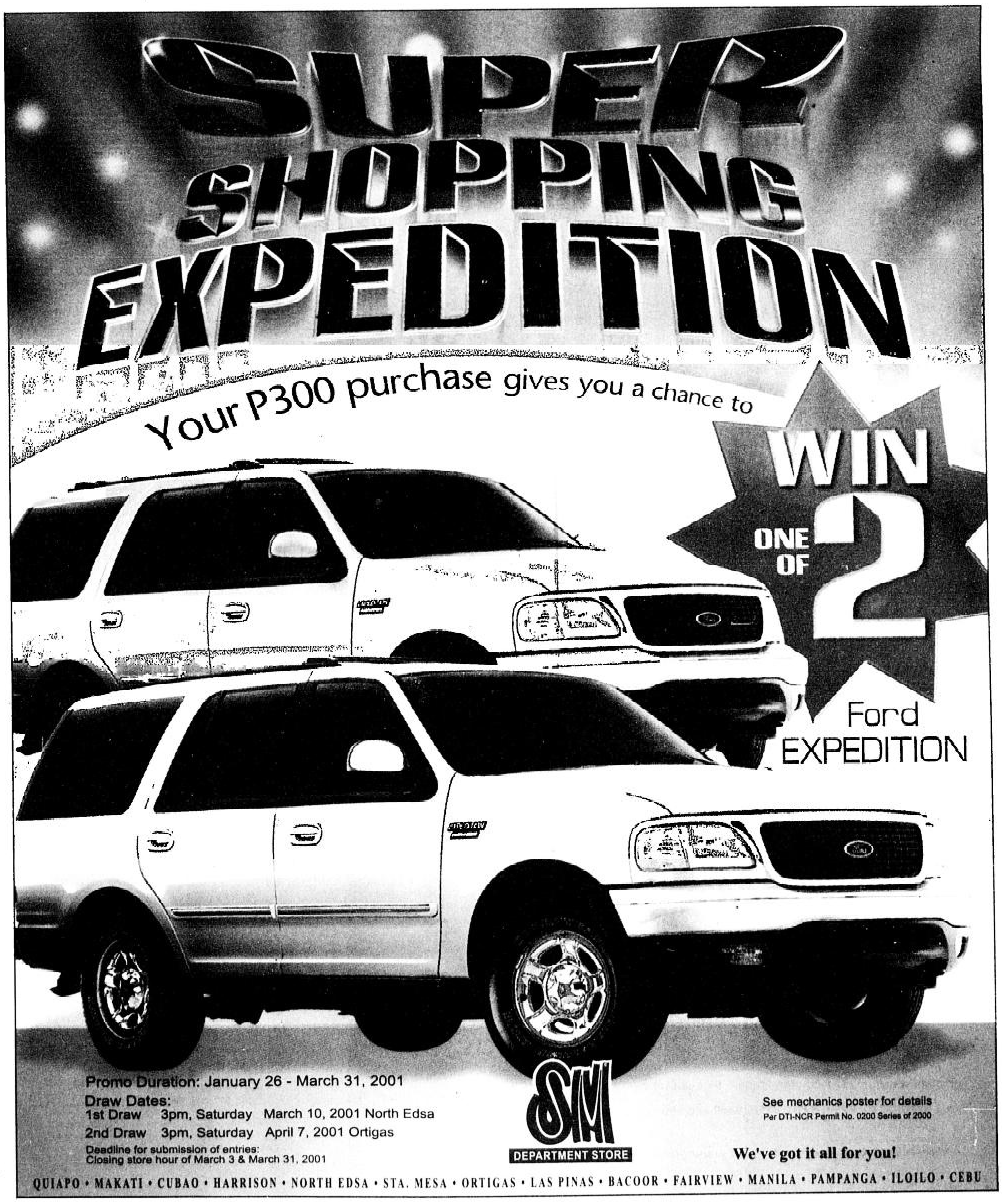
"When I'm 55 years old, I will retire and stay there. I will do the gardens for that resort. It will have Japanese, Thai, Balinese, English, Filipino, formal gardens. My workers will maintain the gardens and their wives will do the housekeeping, so even when I retire, they will have work to do. The cottages will be simple—they need only to be clean—it's the gardens that I want to emphasize. I will create the ambiance of really beautiful gardens."

So far, she has acquired five of the dream 15 ha.

Meantime, son Paul whom she feels may take up where she will leave off in the future, is all praise for Mom. "He makes excuses for me with his teacher when I can't go to PTA meetings," she says. She remembers when her son told his teacher she had no time to attend meetings because "'*Sikat ang* Mommy *ko* (my mother is famous)'."

"*Bakit, artista ba ang* Mommy mo (why, is your mother an actress)?" the teacher asked.

"*Hindi. Gumagawa siya ng garden* (No. She does gardens)," Paul replied, simply.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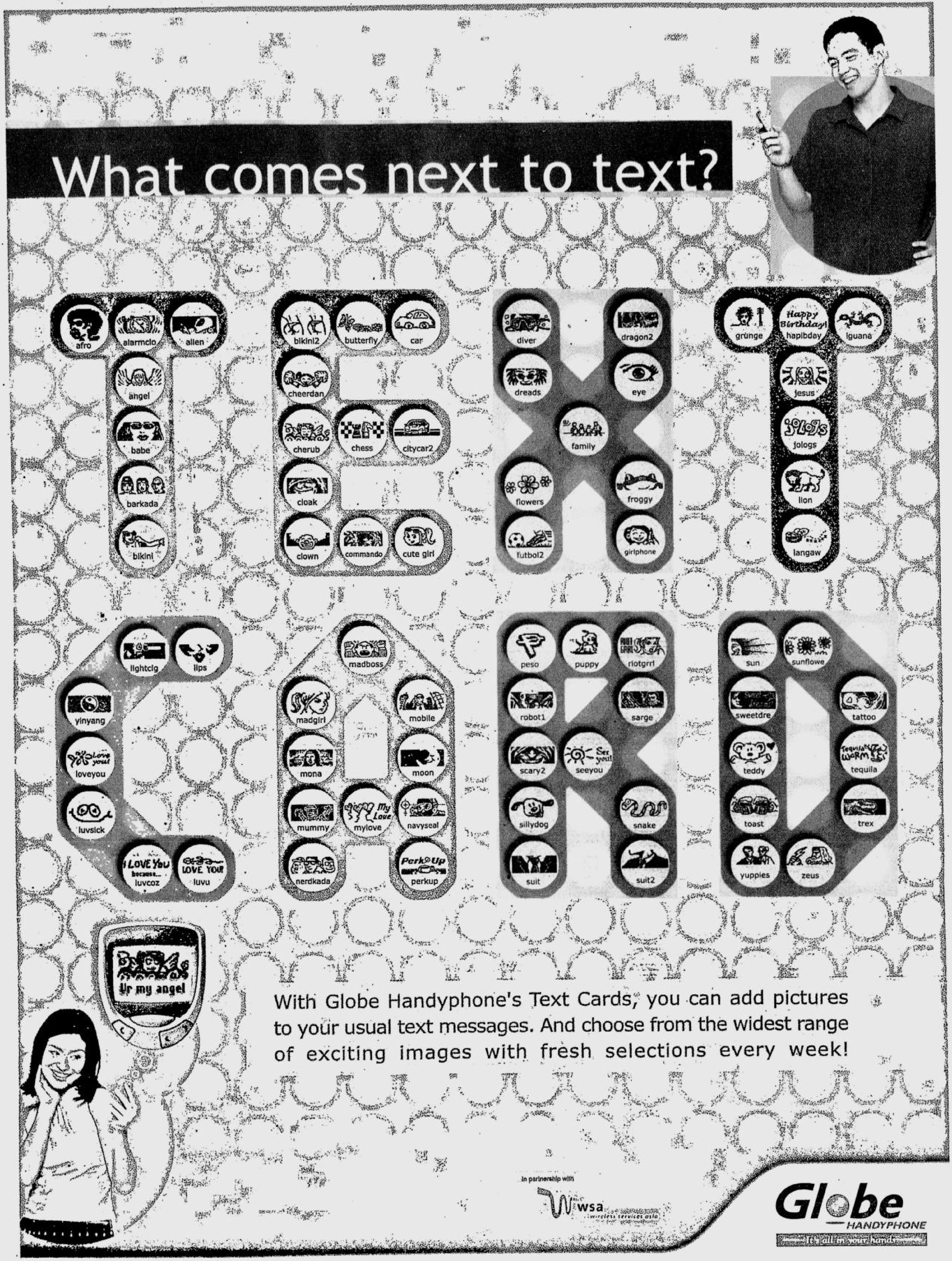
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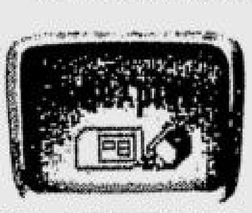

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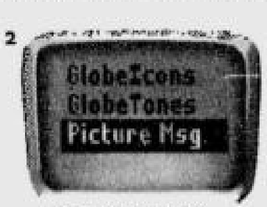
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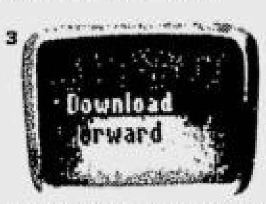
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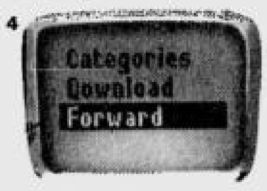
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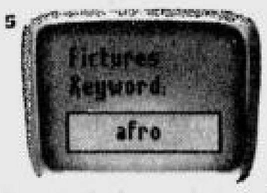
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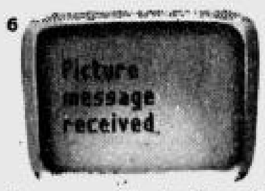
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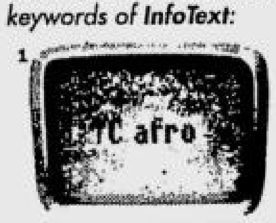

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